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ABSTRACT

Each of the three journal issues comprising volume 19 (1992) of "Children Worldwide" focuses on a specific theme. Issue 1 contains six articles about refugee children, including essays about a community self-help approach in Pakistan, unaccompanied minors in Hong Kong, and refugee families raising children in a new culture; guidelines for working with psychologically distressed children; and a summary of recommendations from the International Catholic Child Bureau (ICCB) Seminar on the Well-Being of Refugee Children. Issue 1 also contains articles about children in Iraq and Latin America, child rights and family life, and evangelization. Issue 2, which deals with the sexual exploitation of children, includes articles about the rehabilitation of sexually exploited children in the Ivory Coast, Mauritania-Senegal, Kenya, Brazil, Colombia, Thailand, India, and the United States; abuse prevention strategies used in Thailand and Belgium; a survey conducted in Ecuador about sexual abuse; the End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism campaign; the United Nations recommendations on child prostitution; the ICCB's role in coalition building; the mass media and sexual exploitation; and legal and juridical issues. Issue 3 focuses on children in intercultural contexts and contains articles on the effects of poverty and marginalization on child development; child abandonment in Eastern Europe; intercultural dynamics between Western and local values in Asia; the challenges of intercultural education in Europe and North America; the culture of urban poverty in Latin America; the effect of Middle Eastern fundamentalism on children; disabled children; parenting; forced migration; ethnic music; and oral traditions. In addition, articles on children's rights, sexual exploitation, and culture are included. (AC)

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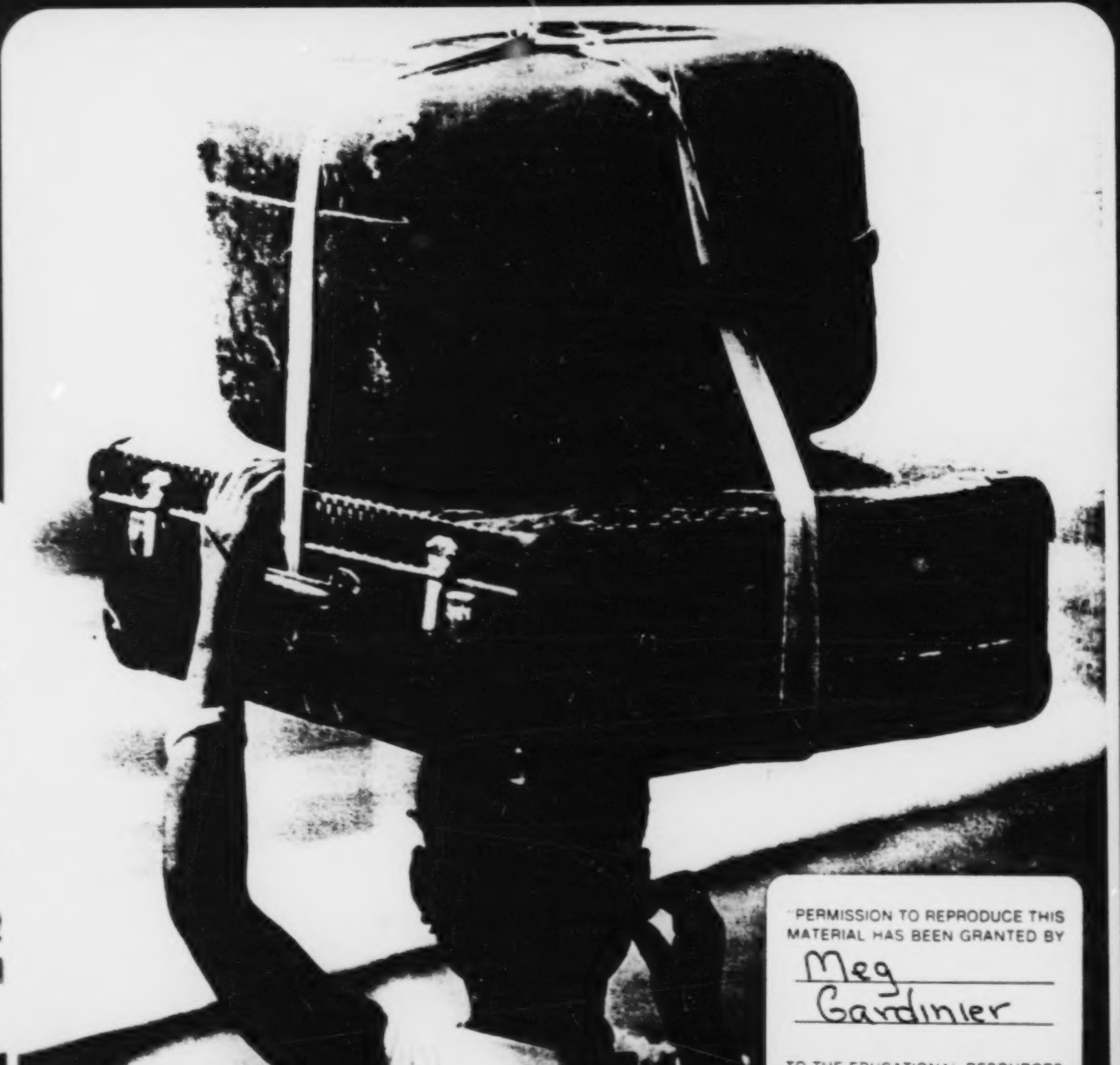

Refugee Children

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A Chance for the Children ?

Anyone reviewing the literature on refugees would be hard-pressed to count the number of times they read that half of the world's refugees are children.

This harsh fact, however, is not reflected either in policy or in assistance programmes implemented with refugee communities. The children's greater numbers do not guarantee that available resources are structured so as to meet their special needs.

Issues of concern for refugee children are inextricably linked with those of refugee women. Children's needs cannot be adequately met without attention to the needs of their care-givers. Yet the needs of both women and children continue to be marginalised as a 'soft option' - the domain of social welfare programmes.

Although there has been increased attention to the special needs of the refugee child in recent years, developments have been haphazard and lack a unifying structure. They are frequently dependent on the level of interest and/or availability of expertise from already over-worked field staff. Priorities for attention to children's needs, therefore, can and do vary from country to country.

A curious convention has arisen of referring to refugee women and children as 'vulnerable groups', despite the fact that they comprise the overwhelming majority of any refugee population. As long as their needs are consigned to the periphery of assistance programmes, there will be little change in their situation.

Yes, refugee children, as all children, are vulnerable, but more so given the events they have experienced. So also are the women, who are expected to fulfil a caring and nurturing role in the face of overwhelming personal and physical difficulties. This condition of vulnerability, however, should not be a matter that is addressed only if resources happen to be available. It should be the priority of assistance programmes.

The events which occasioned their flight are obviously a significant contributing factor to their vulnerability. These events are essentially out of our control. It is within our capacity, however, to work to alleviate the effects of these experiences, and to ensure that their conditions of life upon reaching their 'safe haven' do not render them more vulnerable. It must be recognised that systems and procedures that make 'management' of refugee populations easier for us may place them at increased risk to their physical and emotional well-being.

This is something which it is within our power to achieve, but requires a commitment to rethinking the form and contact of refugees assistance programmes, so that the needs of the children are the focus, not at the periphery, of concern. This necessitates a wholistic, as opposed to the present piecemeal, approach to childen's issues - a theme which pervades the recommendations resulting from the ICCB seminar on the Psychological Well-Being of Refugee Children (Geneva, 23-27 September 1991).

If the children become the focus of action, many other issues may automatically fall into place, for "if we can effectively protect....the children of the displaced, then we may be reasonably certain that we are addressing the totality of the problem" (Professor Guy Goodwin-Gill, Proceedings of ICCB seminar).

We have instruments at our disposal, such as the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child, and UNHCR's own guidelines on refugee children and women, to begin the process of redressing the balance in favour of the children. We must recognise that, as children, they have special needs. As refugee children, with all that this term implies, their needs are unique. It is their right and our responsibility that their needs be met. Perhaps now we could give them a chance to be centre stage, and genuinely commit our resources and concern to promote their present and future well-being.

Margaret McCallin,
Co-ordinator, ICCB Refugee Children's Programme

How about a Peace Dividend for the World's Children ?

James GARBARINO *

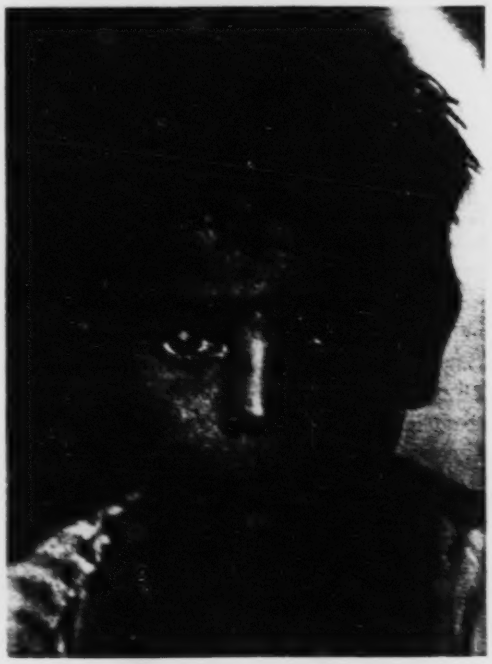
What will the post-Cold War era mean for children? Certainly the "arsenal debates" are intensifying. Each day Congress argues the numbers and cost of conventional offensive and defensive weapons for the United States, while the future of global nuclear arms is being negotiated at presidential level. However, what cries out for rethinking is not just numbers and costs of weapon systems, but the impact of American foreign policy and military spending on the world's children. This new era permits us to rethink issues and questions concerning national policy and priorities without the constraints imposed by the Super Power conflict. In particular, we can now afford to see clearly that every act of military force or arming of parties in civil wars leads to child casualties, direct or indirect. And seeing that, we must take steps to ensure peace in this new world for children.

War is no place for a child, and yet right now hundreds of thousands of children are growing up in war zones around the world. If they are not killed or injured in the war zone, chances are they will flee to become part of the swelling population of refugees and displaced persons, a population that now numbers nearly 20 million worldwide, of whom more than half are children and youth.

For years to come after any war, children pay the price in resources lost to education, health and other basic services, lost to tanks, planes, bullets, bombs and the other weapons of war. And they pay emotionally, in the currency of trauma that comes from family disruption and the terror of being under fire.

It is too easy to lose sight of these children, to lose sight of them in the fog of adult political discussions of national interest and its relation to military strategy, tactics, and technology, discussions that have come unglued in the post-Cold War era.

Wars change things, but rarely cleanly, or even in the direction intended. Perhaps the truest analysis of war is to be found in the expression, "You can change the world, but unless you know what you are doing... please don't!"



For years to come after any war, children pay the price in resources lost to education, health and other basic services, lost to tanks, planes, bullets, bombs and the other weapons of war.

We don't. A generation ago we fought a war in Southeast Asia and exposed many millions there and here to war for goals that mixed delusions of grandeur, self-serving interests, and mistaken ideas of the issues at stake "on the ground." Now few Americans even remember the warring parties, let alone why it was so important to help one side win and the other lose. Political rationalizations only mock the reality of the suffering and the loss.

Was it worth it for their children or for ours? Having visited Southeast Asia recently and seen the legacy of our war there I can see

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[*] President, Erikson Institute for Advanced Study in Child Development, Chicago, USA. Author of "No Place to be a Child : Growing Up in a War Zone", see CW 3/91, p.29.

ICCB Seminar on The Psychological Well-Being of Refugee Children

Geneva, 23-27 September 1991

This seminar which was the culmination of several years of action-research marked an important landmark in the history of the ICCB which has become widely known as a reference in this particular field. Nearly 50 experts attended, representing a great number of countries as far afield as Australia, Canada, Nicaragua, Pakistan, the Philippines, the USA and Zambia. The results of this seminar illustrate concretely the hope for thousands of refugee children to see their non-material rights taken into account as is set out in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The papers presented covered a broad range of issues within three major areas: the context for intervention, strategies of intervention, and the role of the international community. The fundamental principle of the recommendations that were formulated "is that the psycho-social needs of refugee children must be addressed during all phases of a refugee situation, from early warning and emergency responses through durable solutions."

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nothing but generations of suffering and wastage in the wake of our efforts to remake Vietnam in our image. Every month children die in Laos from bombs dropped by American planes in the 1970's. Children lose limb or life when they step on mines planted in Cambodia by one or the other of the warring factions, in many cases mines paid for by American taxpayers in the name of some strategic purpose. Others die as their parents try to leave Vietnam, still devastated by the war there and subsequent economic and diplomatic efforts by our government to punish that country for refusing to yield to us on the battlefield.

Only months after it was achieved, the victory in the Persian Gulf War now begins to seem equally empty. The 100,000+ Iraqi deaths inflicted by the bombing and the ground war are eclipsed by the subsequent casualties - most of them mothers and children - resulting from the destruction of facilities to provide health, sanitation, and food. And yet, Saddam Hussein continues in power in Iraq and an undemocratic regime rules in Kuwait.

All war is war on children

Dead, maimed, or orphaned children are often the "collateral damage" that results from military operations, particularly since most of the killing done in wars is done by artillery and bombing which do not discriminate between civilians and soldiers. Indeed, according to UNICEF, in modern wars most of the casualties are civilians (which reverses the pattern at the turn of the 20th century). Since World War II some 20 million women and children have been direct casualties of war. Many more have suffered psychological devastation. All war is war on children. Can't we now afford to spare ourselves this?

Since World War II some 20 million women and children have been direct casualties of war. Many more have suffered psychological devastation.

I think we can. I think we must. Let's really make war the last resort, for once prevention fails the horror takes on a life of its own. Starting wars is easier than finishing them, as anyone who has been in combat can testify.

Being responsible for the government's decisions

First, we must take charge of our own government's activities. The current rethinking of national military and diplomatic policy provides a prime opportunity in at least two areas. A commitment to peace for children means passing legislation requiring a "child impact analysis" in connection with all military activities supported by American taxpayers.

This means a detailed legal mandate to conduct prior investigation of the costs and benefits to children of deployment of military forces, of arms sales and other forms of military assistance to other countries of new armament technologies, and of provisions made to rehabilitate societies in which wars have been fought. For example, children lose every time our government justifies sending arms and money to oppressive armies in Central America or elsewhere that make war against their civilian populations, no matter what the political rationale.

Second, we can join the civilized nations of the world in ratifying the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We have yet to do so, and remain one of the few major holdouts. Once ratified, the Convention will have the status of international law, and all of us can appeal to its provisions in our efforts to demand responsible behavior from all governments, our own included. We can demand that all nations live up to Article 38's mandate that governments "take all feasible measures to ensure protection and care of children who are affected by armed conflict."

All military activity has potential costs to children. The dawning of a new era in international relations is the perfect opportunity to change the way we think about the costs and benefits of war. Legislation to mandate a child impact analysis for all military spending and ratifying the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child would be a good start. It would truly represent a peace dividend for the world's children. ❑

A Community Self-Help Approach

Refugee Children in Pakistan

Phil BARTLE *
Eva SEGERSTROM **

Where there is a very large refugee population, as in Pakistan, outside resources are limited, even for providing essential survival items (e.g., food, shelter and water). The provision of psychological services for children, therefore, must necessarily tap the most important available resource - the refugees themselves. Techniques of community development (social animation) were modified for this purpose. Reaching children through training for community action promotes a communal self-reliance process.

The Afghans have a tradition of self-reliance. This is shown by the interchangeable use of "refugee camp" with "refugee village". On arrival, agencies give the refugees tents to use as dwellings. Within months of each new "camp" being started, it becomes a "village" because the Afghans themselves then build houses of locally available materials.

There is a range of situations regarding the psychological needs of the Afghan refugee children. For example, through disease or genetics, several children are mentally retarded or hampered in other ways. There is very little community expertise or experience with their needs.

War-traumatized children are among that range of situations. Because fighting continues inside Afghanistan, there are many "fresh arrivals" of refugees who often include children who are in shock by seeing their homes and relatives bombed. Some of the children traumatized by the war appear to their community as mentally retarded. These children tend to be neglected and under-stimulated, mainly because of ignorance that something can be done with and for them.

There is a range of religious ideologies, but the refugees live in communities characterised by fundamentalist Islam. Programmes must be sensitive to cultural issues, particularly those related to women.

In Afghan society, in the refugee villages, very few children are consciously neglected or exploited, a positive consequence of conservative Islamic ideology combined with traditional values still in practice. As long as there is food in the camp, no child will starve; they suffer from ignorance (e.g., malnutrition, disease) and poverty (of the whole community).

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* Anthropologist, sociologist, responsible for programme planning and development of Rädda Barnen in South-West Asia.

** In charge of training in social work, Rädda Barnen, Pakistan.

Although UN and non-governmental agencies provide relief for the refugees, the large number makes it impossible for agencies to care for all the needs. There are no psychological services available. The only practical solution is a community-based self-help approach.

In 1987, on the recommendation of the Rädda Barnen social worker in UNHCR, the Social Welfare Cell (SWC) of the Commissioner for Afghan Refugees (CAR) was created. Its purpose was to create a group of social workers (Pakistani civil servants) who would:

◆ identify vulnerable refugees for special support,

◆ coordinate the field activities of various agencies, and

◆ promote self-help activities.

Rädda Barnen has provided the training for these fieldworkers, who are from various occupational backgrounds, by establishing a training unit (RBTU). The aim of the RBTU is to encourage, motivate and train the Pakistani fieldworkers (and later train and stimulate Afghan refugee volunteers directly).

District coordinators established "social welfare committees" in the camps. Committee members are "community volunteers." The unit trained community volunteers by seminars on different topics to increase social competence. One topic is why it is important to work with children with special needs, mostly mentally retarded. Another topic has been physical disability. In each seminar, one part has been on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

All important decisions are made in the committee. Without involvement of a committee many organisations fail in carrying out a project. The refugee village administration participates in the activities.

The components of community development are:

◆ the community itself defines the needs (objectives),

◆ the resources come from the community,

◆ internal resources may be supported by external resources,

◆ decision-making is democratic,

◆ the approach is "bottom-up," and

◆ activities should be of interest to the whole community.

When talking about "self-help" that means we are working through community development and that the community itself is a resource. In Peshawar, over 150 social welfare committees have been established in about 250 camps throughout the Northwest Frontier Province (NWFP).

The Convention on the Rights of the Child and the Refugee Child

Article 22.1 of the Convention confirms the right of the refugee child to *"receive appropriate protection and humanitarian assistance in the enjoyment of applicable rights set forth in the present Convention".*

Two further articles draw attention to conditions that should be of particular concern when considering the rights of the refugee child, and provide a possible focus for activities to ensure effective implementation of the Convention in situations of forced migration: *"States Parties recognize the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development"* (**Article 27.1**).

Article 39: *"States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of: any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse; torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; or armed conflicts. Such recovery and reintegration shall take place in an environment which fosters the health, self-respect and dignity of the child."(...)*

In order to intervene effectively to protect the rights of refugee children, it will be essential to identify those variables that influence the children's capacity to cope and to adjust to both past and current events and conditions. A consideration of the overall context in which the children are functioning, the interaction between different systems, and the ways in which, individually and colllectively, they have an impact on the children will be most likely to secure a positive developmental outcome. Unless efforts are made to promote a positive environment in all spheres, progress towards normal development will be impeded.

M. McCallin, extracts from the "International Journal of Refugee Law", Oxford University Press, January 1991.

Achievements

Because this programme has a community-based approach, it must be seen as a process. Unlike in a project which has a finite measurable objective, the social process itself is the achievement. Several indicators, nevertheless, indicate that the process is underway.

Since the methods used were adopted from traditional community development techniques, various "hardware" achievements usually associated with them can be mentioned. Roads, latrines, shallow wells, for example, were built with local self-help labour. Reflecting the conservative Islamic culture, mosques were built, and a few waiting rooms for ladies (observing "purdah") were constructed adjacent to basic health units (BHUs). These are fortunate by-products of the real purpose of the programme (a social process).

Other measurable results concern the non-hardware results: the training of trainers and coordinators since mid-1988. Seminars for government civil servants, other NGOs and UN staff about the objectives and techniques of community participation were held.

Training of community volunteers

The training of community volunteers began in late 1989. The most important among them are volunteers now running the child support groups. Other volunteers have been trained as trainers (promotors) for social welfare committees. On request, the training unit has also trained volunteers for special child health-related activities, including EPI (extended programme of immunisation), and the tuberculosis programme. Volunteers were trained for other international NGOs for the identification of vulnerable groups as recipients of income generation and vocational training projects. Volunteers are trained in community animation techniques, the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and children's general and special needs.

Child support

Community self-help "Child Support Groups" (groups for children with special needs: our prime target) composed of adult refugees who have had training from RBTU, engage in many activities in support of children's needs. These include stimulation, rehabilitation, emotional support, and assistance to children with various special needs. Seventeen such groups are now running, and another nine more will be fully functioning by the end of 1991. The training unit provided a big box with training material to trained community volunteers who want to start a group. A deaf Afghan boy made a doll.

The first child group began in January 1990 with eight children. Today the same group has 24 children, divided into two. Two more community volunteers act as leaders. One special committee planned a playground, using local resources, labour and material. A physiotherapist associates with the group and the playground is also in his interest (for his training).

In one camp where there is a child group, the committee decided to construct a house. They asked Rädda Barnen to pay for it. That would have been an easy and quick solution, but would produce the wrong effect. Eventually money came from unknown givers, and community volunteers supplied the labour. The house is theirs and they are very proud of it.

Women's participation

Females run four groups of children. In addition, 42 mothers were trained. The requests for female training are increasing. That makes us happy because (as in all other societies) the women are closer to the children.

In measuring achievements, it must be repeated that the objective of the training unit was not the training of skills or imparting of information, but the stimulation of communal self-help action in the refugee villages. The training is a means to that end.

While the ultimate target group of the training of volunteers to run child groups were infants up to age six or seven, or retarded and disabled children, other training of volunteers was aimed at older children. In a child-to-child approach, "Islamic Khetnatgar" groups were formed. These were originally school-based children's clubs, somewhat similar to Boy Scouts, aimed at getting the children to help run the schools. The training unit aim has been to promote the formation of many more of these groups and expand their scope to include child-to-child activities outside the schools, including hygiene education, involvement of disabled children, introduction of traditional Afghan games, and learning about Afghan local and national traditions. These have now been established in about sixty refugee schools.

The most significant indicator of the

value of this approach is the number of requests coming from "maliks" and other male leaders of other camps and villages to send more animators. Many other international NGOs and agencies have floundered on the hard rocks of extremely conservative Islamic values. Because of pressure from donors, many of these agencies tried to set up programmes for women and immediately clashed with conservative forces in the camps. By starting with the male leaders and taking a communal self-help approach to assistance to children with special needs, the training unit and those it trained found that men in the camps soon asked for training of their women to help the children with special needs. In contrast to the scepticism in the early stages, the training unit can now no longer keep up with the requests (although there has not been an equal demand from all camps).

An interesting conceptual development has also occurred. These refugees see themselves as fighting a "jihad" against the Kabul regime. But the word "jihad" is not all violence. The promoting of good works, social work on behalf of their own children and the vulnerable of their communities, is also called a "jihad."

For some remote areas having populations from upwards of 600,000 refugees, twenty animators are selected for twelve month training (giving them scholarships), to support self-help activities and to co-ordinate NGOs that have problems working in those remote areas. The training includes some preparation for repatriation and cross-border activities, and has a similar focus as the training of community volunteers.

In the second quarter of 1991, a new development appeared. Trained community volunteers began organizing themselves. One group has selected a board. Their objective is to advocate for the needs of disabled children, to give support and encouragement to each other, and to share and develop their experiences. In one camp, the volunteers have established a centre from where they present themselves to aid organizations that come to the camp. The idea has already spread to other camps and groups of community volunteers. RBTU has agreed to support these organized groups of volunteers, as it reflects that the community process is underway, and is constructive.

The objective of the training unit is not the training of skills , but the stimulation of communal self-help action in the refugee villages. The training is a means to that end.

Lessons learned

The programme of training for community action is an effective way to develop human resources in a refugee community, where the refugees themselves are their own greatest resource.

A practical approach and concrete results must be set as clear objectives and seen as results for this process to survive and grow.

The training unit had one marketing project in embroidery and it failed. One reason for the failure was probably lack of involvement from the social welfare committee. Another reason, we believe, is that social workers should stay away from commercial projects.

In all training, the trainees must be supported and encouraged to formulate how they will use the training for practical purposes in their lives. It is not theoretical or academic.

A community-based approach is "messy" in that planning is more difficult, actions are slower to implement, results are more difficult to quantify and the process is less easy to measure than in a relief or service provision approach. This is a social process rather than a finite project.

Scepticism by local administrators, some planners, and many administrators of agencies set up for relief rather than development, comprise the biggest constraint to developing such a process.

Once such barriers are overcome, we recommend this approach as the most practical, action-effective and cost-effective approach to providing many services, including meeting the psychological needs of refugee children. ❑

International Catholic Migration Commission

The ICMC is an operational arm of the Catholic Church. The ICMC mandate is to coordinate Catholic assistance to refugees, migrants and displaced persons, regardless of creed. ICMC operates through a network of local Catholic agencies at the grass-roots level in some 90 countries.

ICMC collaborates closely with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration, the U.S. Agency for International Development and the U.S. State Department's Bureau for Refugee Programs. On behalf of these organizations, ICMC manages, either directly or through its affiliates, some large-scale assistance and resettlement activities.

ICMC also supports projects that its local affiliate or partner agencies undertake, principally in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Projects assist refugees, migrants and displaced persons through education, vocational training, health care, agricultural development and income generation. The majority of these projects aim to enhance self reliance. Many are oriented to the special needs of women and children.

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Unaccompanied Minors Living in Hong Kong

Myra WICHOREK *

The following is a summary of findings from a report assessing issues of concern to Vietnamese unaccompanied minors presently living in detention and refugee centres in Hong Kong. The report was prepared by Myra Wichorek for Community and Family Services International (CFSI) which was established in the Philippines in 1981, and in Hong Kong in 1989, to provide social and mental health services for Indo-Chinese refugees, asylum seekers and those determined to be non-refugees. Specific attention is directed towards children at risk, unaccompanied minors and women, torture victims, victims of violence, the physical and mentally ill, and those individuals and families experiencing psychological difficulties. CFSI is the organization mandated by UNHCR to promote the care and protection of unaccompanied minors in the centres. A copy of the report is available from CFSI (address below).

Throughout the centres, one major issue for the minors was family separation. Living without the love and support of family members proved extremely difficult for many minors. Often, the minors felt that their entire family was counting on him/her to do something impossible (i.e., "achieve" resettlement in a third country). Minors felt that the family's future depended on them alone and their ability to be screened as a refugee. Family members in Vietnam often instructed minors not to return to Vietnam, in the hope that he/she would eventually be given refugee status through humanitarian parole. As a result, even though minors stated they were homesick, lonely and missing their family and home, many felt they could not return to Vietnam, failing in what their family saw as their last hope for survival.

Without the support of family members, minors stated that they felt unloved and uncared for and that something essential was missing in their upbringing. For support and guidance, many minors turned to their peers, some of whom had sought approval and a sense of belonging in anti-social behaviour. Examples of such behaviour include: acting as "running boys" for gang members; falling under the influence of "troublemakers"; and, engaging in sexual activities at an early age and an early stage of a relationship.

Concerns for safety

A second major concern of the child was a feeling of insecurity, a feeling recorded especially in those who had not even distant family members to protect them. Exposure to violence and crime is common in the centres. If minors had not been directly involved in violence, many were witnesses to it. The strategy for coping with the violence depends upon the individual, his/her age, maturity, current support systems and background. However, no matter what the situation, or coping strategy, it is clear that violence is disturbing and destructive to the minor. As seen in the survey data, some children give in to pressure by others to join those they perceive as having the power. Girls are especially vulnerable to sexual exploitation, sometimes persuaded or threatened into living with one man to avoid harrassment by many. Boys are especially vulnerable to criminal exploitation, to alcohol/drugs, theft, extortion and gang membership.

Studies show that the way in which children choose to cope with violence, depends a great deal on how they see their own parents coping. Children fare far worse when they are without parents and have to find their own coping methods.

Exploitation

Due to limited life experience and to the fact that they are unaccompanied, the children in the survey seemed more often exploited than children living within their own family systems. Some minors reported being given too much responsibility by care-givers; for example, they have been asked to

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babysit for the care-givers' own children rather than going to school. They also reported being used as a servant by adults in the community and receiving harsh punishments for what they perceived as small infractions. Two sisters reported being befriended by an older woman only to find she wanted to rob them of their money

Some children become depressed and anxious not knowing how to control the situation, and unable to turn to traditional authority systems which may not operate or have real influence in the centres. Some have problems sleeping; many become withdrawn, non-participative and have poor concentration.

Refugee status and resettlement

One other theme seemed present throughout the centres - the preoccupation with, and constant anxiety over obtaining refugee status and resettlement in a third country. There seems to be a general lack of accurate information and/or understanding about the screening process for unaccompanied minors, and timely feedback or decisions once in the process. Further, it appears that family members in Vietnam, or already resettled in a third country, also lack accurate information about the system. This then leads to the spreading of misinformation/misinterpretation about the process and bad advice, often placing the minor in a "no-win" situation. The entire process seems to generate a great deal of confusion, anxiety and depression for the unaccompanied minors.

Protective factors

Unaccompanied minors who seem to cope best in the centres are those who are busy all day, involved in something they feel is meaningful - usually school/vocational training, work/income-generating projects, and recreational activities. The most clear example of this can be found in the refugee centre information. Half of the unaccompanied minors had jobs or attended school; half did neither. The latter had significant social problems including drug involvement/criminal activity/imprisonment and unwanted pregnancy; the former did not. Children who tended to be in school and active during the day were the ones with either family-based/individualized care-givers or in group living situations.

Unaccompanied minors who have lived in detention and refugee centres, will most likely need time to come to terms with the loneliness, fear and violence they have experienced there. Coping methods used may have allowed the minors some sense of security and safety inside the centres, but once outside, methods may very well be maladaptive. Children may leave the centres withdrawn, uncommunicative, with poor concentration, depressed, with sleeping disorders, hyper-alert or with anti-social behaviour patterns. They will need time to reintegrate into their own family systems, especially if family members blame them for "failing" to obtain refugee status. Minors may have problems complying with parental authority, or fail to show proper respect, having seen traditional leaders go unrecognized or diminished in the centres, lacking in real power or control. Educational and developmental tasks may have been missed out. One of the problems often cited in the survey by the children was the lack of adequate educational opportunity. On the other hand, many children refused to attend school seeing themselves as too old, not interested or having already completed the material being studied in Vietnam. Sufficient time must be taken to go back and "catch up" with others of his/her age if possible. This is difficult for children from whom premature maturity has been demanded, but who have been denied so many changes for achieving a healthy maturation. ❑

ICCB Publications

- ***«The Psychological Well-Being of Refugee Children»**. Margaret McCallin, ICCB, Geneva, 1992.*

Edited proceedings of the ICCB seminar of the same title; chapters describe research and programme activities, and outline policies and strategies to promote the well-being of refugee children and their families.

Available: May 1992, free of charge, from the ICCB General Secretariat.

- ***"Surviving Violence : a recovery programme for children and families"**. Shirley Fozzard, ICCB, Geneva, 1992.*

The book describes the stages and procedures of implementation of the ICCB community-based project to address the psychosocial needs of Mozambican refugees in Ukwimi Refugee Settlement, Zambia.

Available: summer 1992, from the ICCB General Secretariat.

- ***"Selected Bibliography and Survey of Mental Health Issues Relating to Refugee Children: A Resource for Field Workers"**. Jan Williamson.* The bibliography was prepared with the assistance of the UNHCR Documentation Centre, ICCB, Geneva, 1992. Available from the ICCB General Secretariat in Geneva.

Listening to and Talking with Psychologically Distressed Children

Some Guidelines

Elizabeth JAREG *

Listening to and talking with children is an essential component in the child's development. E. Jareg, a child psychiatrist, puts special emphasis on this point. The guidelines she presents here are currently in use as staff training material in work with war-affected children in Mozambique and Sri Lanka, and have been translated into the respective local languages. In using these guidelines as training material, role play is proving to be of vital importance. The author encourages others to develop the text by enriching it with their own experience and observation. Due to lack of space, only the first part of the guidelines can be published here. The full text is available upon request from ICCB Geneva, or from Redd Barna (address below).

Are you a "good listener"? Do you feel you have enough patience to put yourself in the position of listening. Or do you find that you have a tendency to interrupt people?

Are you able to listen to people/children talking about painful feelings without trying to avoid this?

Are you able to deal with a child crying in a natural way, without feeling embarrassed or making the child feel embarrassed?

What about your own attitudes to children: do you accept that they have their own feelings and ideas about things that they have experienced?

Can you take children seriously? Do you like children? Do you feel comfortable talking and being with them?

It is a good idea to think through the above issues, or discuss them with a group of people, to make you more aware of your own capabilities and limitations.

What is "good listening"?

"Good listening" to a child who is distressed is actively taking in what is being said for four main purposes:

◆ To act as a **receiver**, a **holder** of the child's feelings, so that the emotional tension in the child can be released in a **constructive way**.

◆ To increase understanding and knowledge of **what children experience** - as seen through the child's own eyes. This understanding is necessary for planning appropriate interventions for children and families. But it should also enable you to give some help to the child immediately - comfort, relief of guilt feelings, and understanding of why the event happened.

◆ To give the child the feeling of having been "seen", his/her feelings recognised and understood.

◆ When **you** are a good listener, you may act as a model for important people in the child's life, who may not have realised the child's needs for being heard, for being comforted. You are listening with a loving, caring attitude.

Good listening and talking with children involves:

◆ An understanding of the ways in which children react to loss, distressful events, violence, family disruption.

◆ A genuine wish to support children and families in such circumstances, **without taking over parental roles** or creating dependency.

◆ Concentration - make yourself available to the child.

◆ **Full acceptance** of what the child is expressing.

◆ To be able to **identify** with - but not be overwhelmed by the child's expression of his/her feelings. Differentiate

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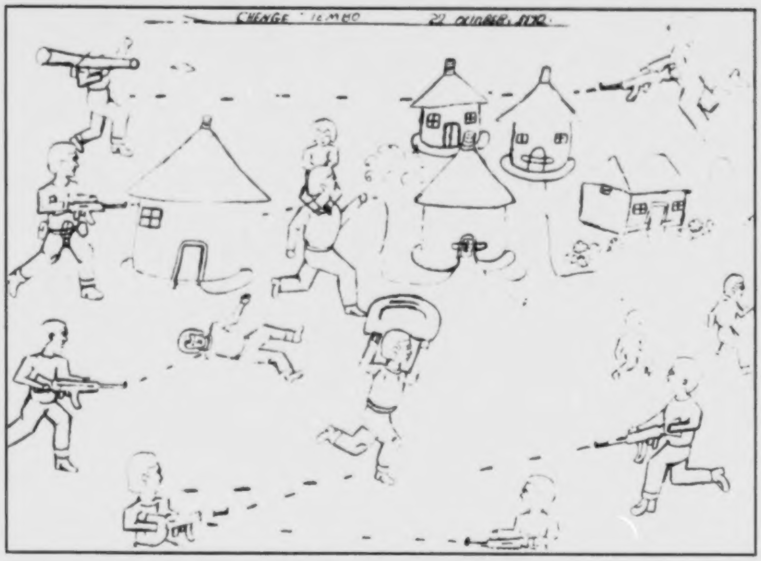

The child also expresses his life by drawing pictures. Drawings by Mozambican refugee children in Zambia, after massacres in their villages.

between the **child's feelings** and **your** own, but let your own feelings show to some extent.

◆ **Patience**: children who are shy, distressed, small, take time sometimes to find words, to formulate ideas. Give them time to do this without conveying through words or your own "body language", that you are impatient.

◆ "Reading" the expressions on the child's face which reflect often very clearly what a child is thinking, and his/her "body language" in general. Is the child about to cry? Feeling embarrassed? Guilty or shamed (difficult to establish eye-contact, hanging head, over-active) is he/she anxious (twining fingers, sweating, can't relax); afraid of close contact? (will not look at you, or sit near you; stiff body, does not like to be touched). Match your conversation with the child, taking into account the child's non-verbal language.

◆ Tolerating pauses, tears, anger. Prepare yourself for strong expressions of emotions from the child; you cannot take away such feeling from the child, or "make her/him forget", but you can share these feelings, be a sounding-board, help the child with the meaning of the feelings, help him/her to understand himself/herself. You can help to correct a child's poor self-image, to reexamine guilt feelings with the child and perhaps arrive at a more realistic interpretation.

Results of a good "supporting conversation" could be:

◆ The child gets some relief from acute suffering or chronic build-up of tension.

◆ The child feels "at last" someone has understood, he/she feels less alone, he/she feels comforted.

◆ It may give the child a new "base for growth" a new starting point, and help to re-establish trust in adults.

◆ You may have opened the eyes of others to the child's distress - and brought parents and children closer. ❑

The Books Project

The Books Project seeks to improve literacy, cross-cultural communication and global understanding by providing students, who are primarily immigrants, an opportunity to write and publish their own stories. The Books Project supports teachers in the implementation of the process-based approach to writing. This approach improves the effectiveness of writing instruction and brings the students' voices and experiences into the classroom.

The books are shared with the community through receptions and presentations. In addition, copies of the books are delivered each summer to a few schools in Central America. The Books Project provides the young authors a vehicle for re-establishing a connection with their country, fostering cultural pride, and building self-esteem through the self-affirming experience of helping others.

The authors are students in the Washington DC Metropolitan Area Public Schools. Many of the immigrant students are from Central America and the Caribbean. In the summer of 1990, the project also worked with children living in local shelters.

Address : 1118 22nd Street NW, Washington DC 20037, USA. Tel. (1-202)429 0137.

Recommendations
on the Well-Being

Geneva, 23 -

The fundamental principle underlying these recommendations is that the psycho-social needs of refugee children must be addressed during all phases of a refugee situation. from early warning and emergency responses through durable solutions.

The elements of a programme to ensure that the psycho-social needs of children are addressed should incorporate:

◆ Greater recognition that there is an integral connection between the protection of refugees and their psycho-social needs;

◆ Emphasis on a development rather than a relief model of services with particular focus on the sustainability of the programmes:

◆ Implementation of community and family services that promote child development:

◆ Early needs assessment regarding the psycho-social condition of refugee children as a basis for appropriate and prompt programme planning:

◆ Reduction in the level of violence in refugee camps by regrouping of refugees along pre-existing ethnic and social lines. development of programmes to address conflict. and establishing shelter/housing that maximise protection of refugee children and women:

◆ Ensuring access to refugee assistance (education. food. health care. etc.) and protection by all children including girl children. unaccompanied children. children born in camps or arriving after initial registration. handicapped and other children considered particularly at risk:

◆ Recognition that refugee children. as children. have different developmental needs than adults and have a clear right to primary education. to engage in play and other recreation. and to additional child-centred activities that aim at the physical and psychological well-being of the child:

◆ Active consultation with and participation of refugee children at all stages of the process:

◆ Recognition that addressing the psycho-social needs of refugee children requires a strengthening of the capacity to address the needs of their parents. particularly their mothers. through programmes for education. health care. child spacing. skills training and income-generation:

◆ Development and implementation of procedures. at all stages of the refugee experience. to prevent separation of families and to expedite family reunion where children have been separated from their families:

◆ Ensuring capacity of refugee children to learn about and preserve their own cultures. including through access to supportive religious and cultural structures and instruction in their own language.

To ensure that these programme elements are implemented, the following steps should be taken.

◆ Appointment of a focal person at UNHCR headquarters. similar in mandate to the Senior Adviser on Refugee Women. with responsibility for ensuring that the needs of refugee children are integrated into all aspects of UNHCR's operations:

◆ Appointment at the field level of a UNHCR focal person with responsibility for ensuring the needs of refugee children are integrated into all assistance and protection efforts;

◆ Development by the UNHCR focal persons of "child impact statements" assessing the effect on children of all decisions taken on refugee assistance and protection:

◆ Immediate implementation by UNHCR senior management. field personnel. government and NGO staff of the Guidelines on Refugee Children;

◆ Procedures to ensure accountability of personnel in following the guidelines. Evaluations of staff and management should assess performance based on actions taken to promote assistance and protection of children:

◆ Incorporation of the provisions and perspectives of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child into all elements of programming for refugee children. UNHCR. government and NGO policies and procedures. including the Guidelines on Refugee Children. should be reviewed and

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changed, where necessary, to ensure their consistency with the Convention;

- Greater participation of refugees, particularly refugee women, in the assessment of needs, planning and implementation of programmes and evaluation of their outcomes. This would help ensure that those aspects of programmes that related to the needs of children receive priority;
- Collection of statistics by age and gender at onset of refugee emergencies and then reviewed periodically to include births/deaths/new arrivals. These statistics should be used as the basis for determining services that are appropriate for children of different ages and gender at different phases of the refugee experience;
- Identification and recruitment of personnel to address the psycho-social needs of refugee children, including quick response teams to assess and make recommendations at the onset of an emergency; NGO staff to design and implement community and family services; and refugee staff to work with their communities in implementing a child development approach;
- Training and support for staff to sensitize them to the specific psycho-social needs of refugee children and the appropriateness of a community development approach to address these needs. This training should be provided to refugee workers, local staff, government officials, non-governmental agency personnel and UNHCR staff at all levels;
- Development of coalitions of concerned groups (for example, refugee agencies, mental health agencies, human rights organizations and researchers) to advocate for greater attention to the psycho-social needs of refugee children;
- Evaluation and practical research that provides feedback to agencies to help them in their planning and implementation of programmes for refugee children;
- Levels and mechanisms of funding that will enable implementation of development-oriented community and family services for refugee children;
- Independent monitoring of the situation of refugee children through such mechanisms as appointment of an ombudsman; missions to refugee camps, settlements and repatriation sites by human rights and child welfare groups; media coverage; and other activities that will bring public visibility to the needs and resources of refugee children;
- Networks for the exchange of information and perspectives on refugee children in order to share successful programme models and materials, identify issues to be addressd, and benefit from research and evaluation studies that have been undertaken.

Greater attention to the situation of displaced children who have not been granted refugee status, including internally displaced children, undocumented asylum-seekers, and individuals whose appplication for refugee status have been rejected. These children do not now receive the protection or assistance of the international community and are subject to continuing deprival of their basic rights.

Greater attention to the situaton of refugee children preparatory to, during and after repatriation. Involvement of refugee women in planning and implementation of repatriation programmes is essential, for their own safety and that of their children.

- Orientation of families regarding their rights on return, the situations they are likely to face upon return and the process by which the repatriation programme will be carried out;
- Implementation of procedures that ensure the physical and legal protection of children on return;
- Preparations within the country of return to improve health, sanitation, water supplies and other facilities to ensure the well-being of returnees;
- Continuity of community and family services to minimise disruption of children upon repatriation;
- Following return, monitoring and assessment of the situation of refugee children and their families to ensure their continued protection and integration in their home country. ❑

Refugee Families Raising Children in a New Culture

Meg GARDINIER *

"Cambodians came to the United States to save their children, but after they arrive, they fear losing their children." explains Dr. Julianne Duncan, in the beginning of a video on parenting in a new culture. The video depicts a series of "mock drama" scenes designed to stimulate discussion among Cambodian parents who have recently arrived in the United States. It is used as a catalyst for discussion at the ICCB sponsored parent support sessions in Tacoma, Washington. For eight weeks in the fall of 1991, Cambodian parents in Providence, Rhode Island and Tacoma, Washington gathered to discuss the challenges of raising their children. Guided by a coordinator and two Cambodian facilitators, parents in each site addressed discipline, intergenerational conflict, dating, gangs, drug abuse and alcoholism; issues not easily discussed in their traditional cultures.**

The primary purpose of the sessions was to encourage communities to draw on their own cultures, traditions, and values so that they can effectively raise their children in a new country.

In a Cambodian village it was not necessary to stop and think: "Am I doing the right thing for my child? People learned from their parents and grandparents," said Julianne Duncan in **Reasons for Living and Hoping**: "But refugees are now in a new culture and a new country. Some of the things that they have always done do not work in a new setting or the new setting now contributes to some of the problems they now experience." (ICCB Inc., New York, 1989, p.70)

Many parent participants said they wanted to learn more about "American culture". "Nowhere is it written that there is a specific North American culture," said Khamchong Luanpraseut, Supervisor of Indochinese Programs in Santa Ana, California. "But you feel its presence everywhere"...success is defined by "materialistic wealth, power and individual freedom" (op. cit., p.26).

A few lines from the poem by Dr. Mai Vang Trang "An Asian View of Cultural Differences" express this succinctly:

We live in peace with nature
You try to impose your will on her

Religion is our first love
Technology is your passion

We delight to think about the meaning of life
You delight in physics

We believe in the freedom of silence
You believe in freedom of speech

We are taught from the cradle to want less and less
You are urged every day to want more and more

Poverty to us is a sign of spiritual elevation
It is to you a sign of degradation

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* Director, ICCB Inc., New York

** Program Caseworker, Lutheran Social Services, Tacoma, Washington. Coordinator of the ICCB project.

People need the chance to discuss and learn from each other

The sessions in Rhode Island and Washington, although initiated for the same purpose, were unique according to the needs expressed by the parents.

The parenting sessions in Washington addressed dating, discipline, religion, child welfare laws, inter-generational conflict, gangs and alcoholism. Each session started with a segment from a video produced by Hoeun Voeuk and Savis Ngo, facilitators for the project. For example, a young male decides to leave home and join a gang to avoid dealing with his father's drinking problem. Yet in the gang, he experiments with illegal drugs. After viewing the video, the facilitator opens up the session for discussion in Khmer. The facilitators make it clear that the stories in video are fictitious and not based on the experience of anyone in particular.

"There is a great feeling of helplessness," explained a participant in one of the sessions. *"People need the chance to reflect, discuss and learn from each other."* Dr. Duncan, stresses the importance of allowing the development of group dynamics. *"The parents quickly become supportive of each other and offer advice,"* she observed.

The parenting series also focused on adapting to a new culture. *"In some instances, we must bend like the river,"* said Houen Vouek. Many parents who viewed the video segment on dating were appalled when a scene depicted young people kissing in public. Furthermore, the concept of Western marriage, a union based on love, sharply differs from traditional views. This point is further illuminated in Dr. Trang's poem:

We marry first, then love
You first love then marry

Our marriage is the beginning of a love affair
Your marriage is the happy end of a romance

It is an indissoluble bond
It is a contract

Teaching children to value their culture and beliefs

The sessions in Providence, Rhode Island were structured around the subject of discipline: a task many Cambodian families find particularly challenging in North America. *"The major themes of our sessions were developing and enforcing family rules that are clear, fair and consistent,"* said Diane Pizzi, coordinator of the parenting sessions in Providence, Rhode Island. The sessions in Providence included enhancing family communication, parents as role models, teaching children to value their culture and beliefs, family communication and inter-generational issues.

The facilitators, Serei Tan and Socheat Hak, encouraged parents to generate a list of Cambodian and Buddhist cultural rules and values as a foundation for family rules. Spiritual and cultural rules are often interconnected. For example: no lying, cheating, killing, stealing, gossiping. Parents also addressed how much time and energy it takes to ensure enforcement of rules: a point which parents of all cultures contend with! In the session on consequences of breaking rules, the facilitators underscored the importance of both positive and negative enforcement. Parents said that they did not always verbally acknowledge when children did well in school although traditionally gifts, especially gold, were given.

The coordinators and facilitators at both sites made arrangements for transportation to and from the sites and child care services during the sessions. Careful attention to these practical points ensured attendance.

A manual is under preparation by the ICCB and Dr. Dan Scheinfeld of the Erikson Institute in Chicago. Its purpose is to provide ideas and information that will be useful to others who wish to do work with refugee families.

The facilitators who lead the weekly sessions fled from the brutal Pol Pot regime in Cambodia. All suffered hardship including the loss of family members, yet their positive attitude toward building a life in a new culture and cheerful disposition are very inspiring. Although there is no one reason why people survive both physical and emotional trauma, a loving and stable family life is a factor: "Many of the facilitators tell family stories than indicate they had strong early nurturing," observed Dr. Dan Scheinfeld. Needless to say, learning lessons from Cambodian newcomers is a gift to the United States. ❑

First Prize for "Enfants Réfugiés du Monde"

The French organisation "Enfants Réfugies du Monde" (ERM), which is a member of ICCB, has been awarded the first Human Rights Prize 1991 by the National Human Rights Consultative Committee for its programme to improve the physical and mental health of displaced children who are victims of violence in Guatemala. This prize is given each year by France, has as its objective "the awarding of scholarships, which honour actions in the field, studies and projects aiming at effective protection and promotion of human rights in the spirit of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights". "Enfants Réfugiés du Monde" works with children who are torn apart by war, violence and exile, through a programme combining health - nutrition - education and training. ERM thus enables children to fight against illness, extreme poverty and exclusion.

Its interdisciplinary teams set up medium- and long-term programmes in the place of refuge. They work in partnership with representatives of local communities and seek to make the populations self-supporting.

Address: "Enfants Réfugiés du Monde", 2 Impasse de la Providence, F - 75020 Paris, France.

Children in Iraq

Manfred FERRARI *

The war has left deep scars in Iraq. Today, the situation is particularly tragic for the women and the children. Suffering from malnutrition, chronic diarrhoea and respiratory infections, many children have lost hope of ever growing up. The author, founder of the association «SOS Children in Need», who has visited Iraq on several ocasions, relates here the living conditions of the Iraqi people: for many children help arrives too late.

hey have shattered our bones but left our skin intact». These were the words used by Archbishop Emmanuel-Karim Delly to describe the situation shortly after the war. As a representative of the Chaldean Catholic Patriarchs, he experienced the war in its most violent form, living only a few hundred metres from Baghdad's military airport.

Anyone travelling through Baghdad at the beginning of 1992 will see only a little of the damage caused by the heavy bombardment of the city. Only a few residential areas were directly hit. But the tragedy of this war is that the infrastructure of the country was almost completely wiped out. The targets were telephone exchanges, electricity generating plants and water treatment stations. As a result, water supplies and sewage purification systems have collapsed. This is what the committed Archbishop meant by his comment. It was practically impossible to lead a normal life after the war. For many people, the summer of 1991 brought a slow death. With tap water contaminated by sewage, drinking water being taken from the Tigris and food rotting in fridges with no electricity, the inhabitants of every part of the country suffered more or less the same fate.

Then help arrived from the UN organisations and the International Red Cross. The latter concentrated first of all on supplying purified drinking water until the installations were reasonably operational again. This was the only way of preventing a much-heralded disaster.

Baghdad now appears, on the surface, to be almost intact. Fleeting visitors see only the external signs of a tragedy that will go on for many months yet. Before the total economic embargo, Iraq was booming. A strong middle class, many of them Christians, kept the economy going. An upper class, close to the regime, was earning a lot of money, but poverty was being kept within limits. This picture changed completely after the war. The middle class was bled dry: it was most affected by the embargo. The number of poor people rose to hundreds of thousands, while the few rich raked in more money through black market imports than they had ever done before.

Children suffer from malnutrition

The people suffering most from this situation are the mothers and children in needy families. The only thing they receive are the meagre contributions from government rationing. This is not enough for a reasonable standard of living. For instance, a 450 g tin of milk powder costs 10% of a month's wages. Fresh milk can scarcely be found at all. As a result of undernourishment, many mothers are unable to breastfeed their babies. More and more women are thus trying to force their babies to drink sugar-water. This keeps them quiet for a few hours, but the withdrawal of nutrients is having its effects.

Every day, women, particularly from the country, come to Baghdad hospital with children suffering from malnutrition because of this. They lie there with their spindly arms and legs, looking around with enormous eyes. Help arrives too late for many of them. A study carried out in late summer by a Harvard student (9,034 families) reported a 400% increase in the infant mortality rate compared with 1990 (104.4 per thousand children under 5 years of age). Malnutrition is also the diagnosis most often made in provincial hospitals (71% in Erbil, 66% in the Kurdish region of Sulaymaniya and 66% in the mainly Christian area, Mossul). There is also a severe lack of medicine. In fact, medicine is given out free of

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* President of the Association "SOS Children in Need", Aabergergasse 50, Postfach 938, CH-3000 Bern 7, Switzerland. *Original in German.*

charge as, in this kind of situation, only wealthy families can afford to have it directly imported from Jordan. Many hospitals are so overcrowded that they are forced to send their little patients back home after only a few days of treatment.

Psychological effects of bombardments on children

Again in summer, the second highest (water-related) diagnosis was chronic diarrhoea, which was more widespread in children's hospitals than respiratory tract diseases. The lack of suitable antibiotics had a fatal effect here, too. Little attention has been paid so far to the psychological effect of the bombardments on children. In the above-mentioned Harvard study, a team of specialists examined these effects. They found that almost 70% of all children questioned had lost hope of ever staying alive to grow up. They were afraid of dying before coming of age. This is obviously a direct result of psychological belligerency. Even after the liberation of Kuwait, allied units had flown through the sound barrier over Baghdad. These detonations, similar to a bombing raid, were only stopped after protests from a foreign church leader.

Anyone who knows anything about the pride of the Arabs will know that beggars are taboo in this region. A year ago, no beggar could be seen on the streets. Now one can hardly find a street corner without one. Children are particularly noticeable. They work as shoe-shine boys, cigarette sellers or vegetable and biscuit sellers. The crime rate is rising steeply. In spite of the extremely strong police presence, this situation will deteriorate.

The outlook for the Iraqi people is as gloomy as ever. On the one hand, the very poor are struggling under the total economic embargo, while on the other hand the regime will not accept the conditions for oil sales laid down by the UN Security Council. Survival means being able to sell everything you own. Auctions, sometimes held on the Muslim sabbath, Friday, reveal the agonising situation. Selling an armchair may guarantee milk powder rations for a month. But what then? There is no black market for medicine, of course.

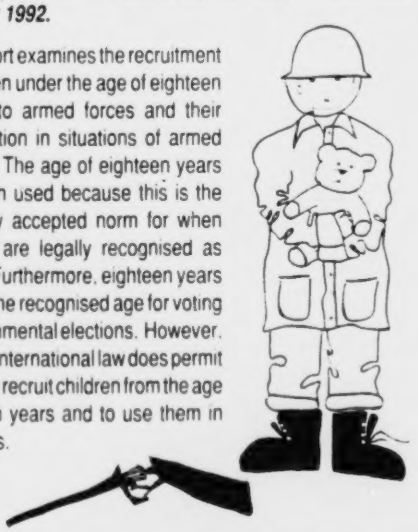
Many relief organisations are active in Iraq. Large organisations are helping by operating over large areas, while smaller ones such as «SOS Children in Need» are concentrating on particular areas. These actions, known as «SOS Children», uses the infrastructure of the Chaldean Catholic Church. Since the beginning of the year, they have been under the patronage of Archbishop Delly. Knowing that enough foodstuffs can be bought on the black market, direct help is given to large families using donations received. Thus large amounts of Nestlé baby milk powder can be obtained in the country itself and distributed free. It goes without saying that both Christians and Muslims benefit equally from this as there is absolute religious freedom in Iraq, something that is quite rare in the Arab world.

It is difficult to foresee any solution for the tragedy in Iraq. The fact that the poorest people, particularly mothers and children, are suffering most there, is in fact typical of what happens worldwide. It is a pity that this time it is happening in a country which was experiencing relative wealth beforehand. ❑

A Report on Child Soldiers

"Child Soldiers", A Quaker Peace and Service Report, M. MacPherson, Geneva, January 1992.

This report examines the recruitment of children under the age of eighteen years into armed forces and their participation in situations of armed conflict. The age of eighteen years has been used because this is the generally accepted norm for when children are legally recognised as adults. Furthermore, eighteen years is often the recognised age for voting in governmental elections. However, existing international law does permit States to recruit children from the age of fifteen years and to use them in hostilities.



The phenomenon of child soldiers is introduced, and their use by governments and non-governmental entities in some twenty-one countries is summarized. There is also some evidence that children are participating in armed forces in Chad, Indonesia, Somalia and Western Sahara.

The report also makes recommendations with a view to protecting children from recruitment into armed forces and participation in hostilities and seeks an appropriate response from the international community.

This report is available from the Quaker United Nations Office, Avenue du Mervelet 13, CH - 1209, Geneva, Switzerland and the Quaker United Nations Office, 777 United Nations Plaza, New York N.Y. 10017, USA.

A Disaster, but Hope for the Future

Juan Miguel PETIT *

Actions aimed at protecting children at risk have not been given priority in political agendas in Latin America. Interventions have been characterised more by their immediacy and urgency than by planning. At the same time, however, creative and effective social strategies have been developed with very few resources. But the solutions proposed constitute a panoply of superimposed efforts rather than a set of interlinked actions. Thus they do not make up a «system» or «protection network». In spite of this, there are some encouraging features: the transcending of paternalism and of the massive institutionalised response, the challenge of becoming involved in the community, reinforcing the social fabric, supporting families at risk and creating spaces for children who are moving away from formal education. Prevention from the point of view of the enjoyment of rights is starting to dominate ideologically the scenario of child protection.

Lawyer. Former Director of the Instituto Nacional del Menor, Uruguay. Text summarised by the editor. The complete, original Spanish version is available from the ICCB in Geneva or Montevideo (for addresses: see p. 31)

Religious communities financed by donations and community contributions were the first people to provide child protection solutions in the region.

Slowly, with the consolidation of national governments and the development of a liberal ideology, an increasingly active role was played by the public sector. Thus, between the 1930s and 1970s, the first «national child protection organisations» mushroomed, while family and child codes emerged earlier (from 1927 onwards).

In general, legislation reflects the same dispersion and partiality as aid programmes, creating vacuums, conflicts of power and the lack of a homogenous ideological framework. Some exceptions to this are the 1934 Child Welfare Code in Uruguay and, more recently, the 1979 Brazilian Statute of the Child and Adolescent.

A central aspect was the emergence of special courts for minors: family or juvenile magistrates and tribunals were set up and differentiated from the legal solutions reserved for the adult world.

Legislation on guardians superseded the repressive and punitive terminology, but the legal discourse was replaced by a paternalist discourse. In some cases, such as that of socially underprivileged children, more rigorous solutions were introduced than for adults.

The powers of the magistrates and the apathy of the authorities as regards creating alternative methods of rehabilitation often resulted in a disproportion between the offence committed and the judicial solution which, in addition, sometimes lacked minimum guarantees regarding court proceedings.

Juvenile magistrates have always been people with legal training, but no preparation for dealing with children. As they did not have suitable experts to advise them, they have had to operate in isolation from the services and resources for the children and young people on whom they have had to pass sentence.

Places of detention lack experts and skilled personnel, and hence, are reproducers of a marginalised socio-economic medium.

Two Booklets on the Rights of the Child

Costa-Rica - "For the defence of the child and his family"

The Foundation Paniamor and Caritas Costa Rica have published a small booklet, very simply written and illustrated, which is intended to assist catechists when talking with children about the delicate problem of sexual abuse in the family. It is a preventive tool that aims at helping a child to distinguish between what he can say "yes" to, and what he can and must say "no" to, to regain confidence in himself and those around him and, above all, in God through prayer and other actions. This project was financially assisted by ICCB.

Fundación Paniamor, Apartado postal 376-21250 Moravia, San Jose, Costa Rica.

Catalonia, Spain - "By educating children, we defend their rights"

The "Moviment de Centres d'Esplai Cristians" (Movement of Christian Leisure Centres) of Barcelona, which is part of the "Coordinació Catalana de Colonies, Casais iClubs d'Esplai" - a Federation of Catalan holiday camps and leisure centres - has compiled a booklet of short stories to teach children and their families how to defend their rights. This movement has worked for two school years with all its educators on the rights of the child and the UN Convention. The booklet and the material concerning the campaign are in Catalan.

Available from: Coordinacio Catalana de Colonies, Casais i Clubs d'Esplai, Mumància 149-151, E - 08029 Barcelona, Spain.

Organised lack of protection and the barrier created by the crisis

State interest in this area has increased constantly. Small bodies or administrative units have grown in the last 30 years into national bodies and ministries with powers in the areas of children and the family.

This occurred in societies affected by the increase in the repayments and interest on foreign debts, and the drop in international prices for basic commodities.

In addition to this, there have been sharp reductions in real salaries, an increase in unemployment, growing marginalisation and poverty and the most serious inequalities of all the continents. Statistics sometimes manage to conceal all of this.

An alarming number of children are among those affected by poverty. Very far removed from social developments, these children suffer from malnutrition, socio-cultural marginalisation and infant mortality. In 1970, 28 million children under 6 years of age were living in poverty: the estimated figure for the year 2000 is 50 million.

In addition to the crisis during the '80s, there was a problem of armed violence in some countries in the region, which increased the number of orphans, disabled and dead children.

Child problems in Latin America are rooted in urban and rural poverty and the underdeveloped societies found there. Thus specific plans in this field must be linked in a strategy to combat poverty, although they should not concentrate totally on this.

However, the main obstacle to child protection mechanisms is not simply the lack of resources but also the antiquated solutions that have always been applied.

The reasons for the disaster

In the midst of this scenario, the «national child organisations» are beginning to reel.

Ideological paradigms have collapsed throughout the world, and the economic crisis is casting doubt on the legitimacy of many governments to ensure basic well-being. There is no sense in launching models which do not emerge from the groups for whom they are destined.

We are witnessing the collapse of the model used by various countries as a basis for establishing organisations to protect children at risk.

Responses have always been influenced by paternalistic aid models from the middle of the century.

As these were to a large extent developed in the public sector, they have retained the homogeneity and rigidity of bureaucracy. They are now being surpassed by a social situation which is much more dynamic than such paternalistic aid solutions could ever be.

These organisations are like a trick society is playing on itself, pretending that it has managed to guarantee child development.

The increase in urban violence means that the mass media are disseminating an aggressive, dangerous stereotype of children from underprivileged classes. Public opinion will identify this image with child protection organisations and the children they are protecting.

It is a strange thing that the establishment of «national child protection organisations» has consolidated a situation involving a global lack of protection. This happened because children's problems began to become identified with the more serious cases of abandonment and social deviation. An institutionalised response was provided which made it more difficult to integrate marginalised people into society. It acted as another mechanism to control society.

There are few mechanisms to protect children from ill-treatment, abuse at work, lack of family care, environmental contamination, etc. The institutional response is like a hospital which only receives serious cases.

There are many reasons for the deadlock in this type of response. The consequences of interventions based to a significant extent on the state, as a result of the weakness of our civil societies and communities, have already been mentioned. The absence of a specific policy for minorities has become a customary thing. At the other extreme, it has been all too easy to politicise the topic.

A high price has also been paid for the corporatism of certain professions where social workers, doctors and judges have been more concerned with increasing their spheres of action and concealing their errors than with developing inter-disciplinary action.

The basis for reform

Some countries in the region are reforming intervention methods. This involves ending the privileges of bureaucratic power centres, breaking down corporatist sources and destroying the psychological barriers surrounding policies on children. Actions are beginning to be outlined which constitute a «global child protection system». This requires the reinforcement of a community network which will enable a public social service system to be created.

«Child organisations» cannot and should not do everything. But, with a new relationship and links with different partners, organisations and public services working in the field, they can act as catalysts, opening up this area, formulating initiatives, injecting dynamism into experiments and encouraging society to play a major part in resolving its own shortcomings. We are facing a crossroads in this region.

The destruction of the old method of intervention is leaving the way clear for winds of change. Change requires a good dose of clarity, courage and resolution. Sometimes it is easier to refloat an old model than to break down the resistance and fear of change involved in applying a new one.

Bold measures are needed to transform the situation. The objective is to radically change the protection mechanisms for Latin American children in societies that are becoming increasingly hostile. ❑

Latin American Seminar on the Prevention of Drug Abuse

On 17, 18 and 19 October 1991, a seminar on «Busqueda metodologica: algunas experiencias de reflexión y acción» (methodological research: some food for thought and action) was held in Buenos Aires. The topic discussed was preventive education and drug abuse. It was jointly organised by the Fundación Convivir in Argentina, the Grupo Internacional de Investigacion en Toxicomaniá, which belongs to the International Federation of Catholic Universities, and the ICCB Secretariat for Latin America. It was attended by about 20 experts from various programmes connected with the three organisations mentioned above.

Conclusions of the seminar

◆ Prevention cannot be confined to reductionist models from abroad which are imposed on local situations and are inadequate. They do not take account of local features and the motivations of the individuals and communities in which they are being applied.

◆ There are institutions, actors and programmes with similar goals of preventive interventions and a broad base of methodologies and actions, geared to creating alternative models.

◆ Cooperation between these institutions and action coordination, involving discussion and a systematic construction of alternative methodologies for the proposed model is required.

◆ The main elements are:
- inter-disciplinary
- inter-institutional
- research
- local, national and international coordination
- solidarity, cooperation and pluralism.

Recommendations of the Seminar

◆ Research/active participation should be applied as a preventive methodology.

◆ On-going inter-disciplinary training should be promoted as a means of developing and updating alternative models.

◆ An impetus should be given to strategic consultation to create alternative models.

◆ Proper advantage should be taken of resources in line with the consultation strategy.

◆ Guidelines should be produced for those involved in decision-making and these should be circulated widely and democratically.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989 and ratified by over 100 countries to date, has positive implications for family life. The children's convention urges States Parties to adopt policies which promote family life, a major theme in the papal encyclicals which constitute 100 years of Catholic social teaching. Furthermore, the children's convention affirms what currently exists in Catholic Social Teaching as it relates to the specific needs of children when parents, extended family and community cannot care for them.

The U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child and Catholic Social Teaching on Family Life

A Comparative Analysis

Meg GARDINIER *

Papal encyclicals are an ardent defender of family life as the «basic cell of society» (**Pacem in Terris, 1963** No. 16) and «a society in its own right.» (**Familiaris Consortio**, 1981, No. 45)

In **Familiaris Consortio** (1981) John Paul II defines the family as a community of persons founded and given life by love: husband, wife, parents, children, and relatives. (No. 18)

The terminology «family» in the children's convention refers to parents, legal guardians, extended family and in some instances, community.

The United Nations instruments repeatedly stress the importance of families. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, (Article 16.3) states that the family is the natural and fundamental unit of society and is entitled to protection by society and the State. The International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Article 10.1) and International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights speak of both protection and assistance for families. The 1959 Declaration of the Rights of the Child and the 1986 Declaration on Social and Legal Principles relating to the Protection and Welfare of Children stress the crucial link between the well-being of the child and the welfare of his or her family.

More than fifteen of the 54 articles in the children's convention mention parents, family, extended family or community. The provisions of the children's convention support the primary role of parents, or guardians in raising children; recognize the right of parents to guide the religious development of children; advocate legislation and economic policies which support family life, including special care for the disabled, and articulate special protection for children when the family cannot function for reasons of abuse and neglect, or separation from parents due to war and forced migration.

The examples which follow make reference to papal encyclicals, statements and conciliar documents which reinforce the Convention's provisions.

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* Director, ICCB Inc. New York.

The primary role of parents or guardians in raising children and safeguarding the rights of the child

The vital role of the family in safeguarding the rights of the child is a prominent theme throughout the children's convention. For example, **Article 5** states:

States Parties shall respect the responsibilities, rights, and duties of parents, or, where applicable, the members of the extended family or community to provide appropriate direction and guidance in the exercise by the child of the rights recognized in the Convention.

In **Familiaris Consortio**, John Paul II emphasizes that children have special needs and rights. *In the family, which is a community of persons, special attention must be devoted to the children, by developing a profound esteem for their personal dignity, and a great respect and generous concern for their rights."* (No. 26)

Article 18 of the Convention recognizes the inalienable role of parents in raising their children: *"States Parties shall use their best effort to ensure recognition of the principle that both parents have common responsibilities for the upbringing and development of the child. Parents, or as the case may be, legal guardians, have the primary responsibility for the upbringing and development of the child. The best interests of the child will be their basic concern."*

A century before, Pope Leo XIII expressed this in **Rerum Novarum**, 1891: «Before [children] have the use of free will, they are kept under the care of their parents.» (No. 21.)

In **Pacem in Terris**,(1963) Pope John XXIII writes that «*support and education of children is a right which belongs primarily to the parents.*» (Nos. 16-17)

Pope John Paul II, at a conference for European Journalists in Rome, 1979, reflects on the major responsibility of parents, particularly in the formative years of a child's life: *"When one speaks of the rights of the child, one is really speaking of the duties of parents and educators to serve the child and its higher interests."*

By fulfilling this responsibility, parents provide the foundation for the future development of the child: *"But as it grows up, the child itself must participate in its own development and assume responsibilities commensurate with its capacities. It must also be made aware of its duties to others and society."*

The family and the freedom of thought, conscience and religion

Article 14 on religious freedom firmly respects the principle role of parents to provide guidance in the exercise of this right appropriate to the age and maturity of the child. *"The States Parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion. The States Parties shall respect the rights and duties of parents to provide direction to the child in the exercise of his or her right in a manner consistent with the evolving capacities of the child."*

Mater et Magistra (1961) states that religious education, a duty of the parents, should prepare children for a responsible life. (No. 195)

In **Pacem in Terris**, (1963) Pope John XXIII, affirms the Church's historical commitment to religious freedom: *"Also among man's rights is that of being able to worship God in accordance with the right dictates of his own conscience, and to profess his religion in both public and private."* (No. 10.)

Financial responsibility of parents; legislative support and financial assistance to support families

The need for both a just economy and social policies to support families is rooted in a century of Catholic social teaching. It is here that we find one of the strongest links between the children's convention and a century of Catholic social teaching. For example, in **Rerum Novarum** Pope Leo XIII states: *"If a family is in such extreme difficulty and unable to help itself, it is right that the distress be remedied by public aid, for each individual family is part of the community."* (1891, No. 21)

The principle of subsidiarity which had its origins in **Quadragesimo Anno** (1931) - «*one should not withdraw from individuals and commit to communities what they can accomplish by their own enterprise and industry*» - is a prominent theme in papal encyclicals. (See also **Pacem in Terris** and **Sollicitudo Rei Socialis**).

It is clearly expressed that families need some support from the State so that they can live up to their vocation and responsibilities: In **Pacem in Terris**, Pope John XXIII, states that families are deserving of a full range of rights: *"The family founded upon marriage freely contracted, must be regarded as the natural, primary cell of human society. The interest of the family must therefore be taken very specially into consideration in social and economic affairs, as well as in the sphere of faith and morals. For all of these have to do with strengthening the family and assisting it in the fulfilment of it mission"*. (Nos. 16-17)

In Quadragesimo Anno, Pope Pius XI lauds governments which provide support for families in need: *"We might utter a word of praise for various systems devised and attempted by which an increased wage is paid in view of increasing family burdens and a special provision is made for needs."*

Gaudium et Spes (Vatican Council II, 1965) advances the notion that the healthy condition of individuals and societies depends on a stable family life and that all persons have rights to goods sufficient for themselves and their families.

References to the development of the family and work and family life are made in **Mater et Magistra** (Pope John XXIII, 1961, No. 68) **Laborem Exercens** (John Paul II, 1981, No. 10) and **Sollicitudo Rei Socialis**. (John Paul II, 1988, No. 33).

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In **Centesimus Annus**, (1991) John Paul II calls for just social policies which support the family: *"It can happen, however, that when a family does decide to live up fully to its vocation, it finds itself without the necessary support from the State and without sufficient resources. It is urgent therefore to promote not only family policies, but also those social policies which have the family as their principle object, policies which assist the family by providing adequate resources and efficient means of support, both for bringing up children and for looking after the elderly."* (No. 49)

Although the Convention re-cognizes that parents have the primary financial responsibility for their children (Article 27.2), it also calls upon States Parties to support the family through just legislation, and economic and social policies. According to Article 18, States Parties should provide assistance to parents and guardians related to their child-rearing responsibilities. Further-more, States Parties are called upon to ensure that working parents have the right to benefit from child-care services.

Article 27 articulates that States Parties shall: *«In case of need provide material assistance and support programmes, with regard to nutrition, clothing and housing.»*

Special care for families of disabled

Article 23 of the children's convention states that States Parties should make provision for special care for disabled children and where possible, for parents and others responsible for his or her care. The article also advocates that where possible, the services for disabled children should be free of charge.

John Paul II emphasizes the rights of disabled children in particular: "The need for children's rights| *is true for every child, but becomes all the more urgent the smaller the child is and the more it is in need of everything, when it is sick, suffering or handicapped."* (**Familiaris Consortio**, no. 26-27).

Convention on the Rights of the Child

States Parties - States Signatories

States Parties are those countries that have committed themselves to the Convention through either ratification (after signature) or accession (without signing).

Signatories are countries that have expressed interest in the Conventon by signing it, and are considering ratification.

When a country has ratified or acceded to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, it must review national law to make sure it is in line with the provisions of the Convention. It declares itself bound to observe these provisions, and becomes answerable to the international community if it fails to comply with them.

The Convention entered into force on 2 September 1990 - one month after the twentieth State ratified it - and on that date it became international law for those first twenty States. For other States, the Convention enters into force thirty days after they ratify or accede to it. A little over seven months separated the opening for signature and the entry into force of the Convention; this is a very short period for an international treaty - generally it takes much longer - and it shows the world-wide interest and support for the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Listing updated 18/3/92 : States Parties : 114 countries (Africa : 36; Asia : 20; South America : 28 ; W. Europe and others : 18; Central and Eastern Europe : 12).

Signatories Parties : 30 countries.

Support for Children in the Absence of Family Life

The Convention calls on States Parties to protect children who are separated from one or more of their parents due to cases of abuse and neglect; forced migration due to war [or natural disasters]. There are specific articles which address the rights of refugee children and the right to family reunification. The Convention calls upon States Parties to make special provisions for children in temporary care including institutions and foster care. For the first time in a treaty, children in foster care are entitled to be placed with a family that has a similar culture and religion.

If all measures undertaken to maintain the child in a family environment, including the extended family, are exhausted, Article 21 makes provisions for adoption, an alternative highly favored in Catholic social teaching. In **Familiaris Consortio**, John Paul II says that adoption is «an important service in life.» (No.14)

The papal encyclicals also speak to the care of families in difficult cases. In **Familiaris Consortio**, John Paul II, calls for both assistance to families in difficult circumstances and advocacy efforts aimed at preventing these problems. In particular, the following family situations are mentioned: migrant families, families of those in prison, refugees and exile, the homeless, single parents, families discriminated against for political reasons. (no. 77) All of these have a parallel in the children's convention. For example, the article on sexual exploitation, children of migrant families, refugee children, right to a decent standard of living.

Swift ratification of the children's convention and proper implementation and monitoring of these provisions could be an important first step in securing a stronger family life for the world's children. The Holy See was the fourth States Party to ratify the Convention and encouraged other governments to ratify as well. For Christians this is a beginning for attaining a fulfillment for family life expressed by John Paul II in **Familiaris Consortio**: *«Family, become what you are.»* (No.17) ❏

The Challenge of Evangelisation

Father François COUDREAU *

The 29th General Assembly of the Conference of International Catholic Organizations (ICOs) was held at the end of December in Rome. It re-elected its President, Mr. Amin Fahim from Egypt (who is also the President of ICCB), for a new 2-year term. One of the very important moments was the audience that Pope John-Paul II accorded to the 80 participants representing more than 30 organisations. He underlined the importance of their presence in the world, a presence that had the support of the Church. The Pope also called for the presence of the ICOs in the preparation of the International Year of the Family proclaimed by the United Nations for 1994. All this encourages the activities of the ICOs in the United Nations system, as was confirmed by the direction taken during the General Assembly and the colloquium on evangelisation that preceded it. Father François Coudreau presents here the essential stages of this colloquium whose theme was : "Evangelisation : Taking Up the Challenge".

A first challenge had to be taken up: each ICO had undertaken to send four delegates, two of whom would if possible come from the Third World, or in any case a continent other than Europe. While not everyone met this challenge, many did make an effort. This was the case for the ICCB.

The second challenge was to consider whether the ICOs were putting into practice in their research and action programmes the astonishing intuition of John XXIII when he invited the Church to **modernise its mission in line with the signs of the times.** This was echoed in the Vatican II Council in the decree on missionary activity «ad gentes», where those involved in evangelisation were asked to look for the seeds of salvation in order to help them grow.

To prepare for this delicate, decisive process, a questionnaire was sent to each ICO ... There were 17 replies ... The task of the symposium was to give **meaning** to the two expressions «signs of the times» and «seeds» of salvation» and, for the purposes of Evangelisation, to seek inspiration that is not just new but **renewed** internally. This involved three stages:

- identification: discovering and recognising;
- calling : hearing and meeting;
- conversion: checking and commitment.

Each stage comprised four further steps: a report on the **replies** to the questionnaire, a **presentation** by a «resource person», a workshop **exchange** and a plenary session debate. It is impossible to present all the debates in this short article. To grasp some of the richness one should read the symposium proceedings. The few lightening insights we dare to give here are intended to lead into and introduce this document.

Amin Fahim and John-Paul II, at the Conference of ICOs. Rome, December 1991.

Identification : discovering and recognising

The signs of the times referred to by the symposium may be divided into four groups. In order not to miss these opportunities, from which the mission itself must emerge, one must first of all be able to recognise them:

◆ **The extent of change**: rather than evolution or revolution we must talk about giant ruptures: the collapse of structures and institutions, dissolving of standards, calling into question of all the «powers that be», population explosions and dramatic drops in birth rates, thirst for consumerism: «everything, at once, at any price».

◆ **Distressing situations**: poverty, misery and hunger, illiteracy, no possibility of education, the excluded and marginalised, prisoners, the unemployed and street children, nicotine addiction, alcoholism, drug addiction and AIDS, violence, racism, war, suicide, not to mention the debts of the poorest countries, and the position of women and children.

◆ **A critical evaluation**: a pluralist world, a multi-racial, multi-cultural, multi-religious society, internationalisation of economic, political and cultural problems, the domination of the West, the rise in fundamentalism, the poor distribution of wealth, the power of the economy, scientific and technological progress and its ambiguity.

◆ **The presence of the Spirit**: the dignity of the person and the recognition of his spiritual dimension as a source of human rights, the rights of women, the family and children; the rediscovery of the person as a whole; the search for authenticity, truth, justice, peace; rejection of force and domination, commitment to save nature and preserve the ecological balance, the failure of ideologies, etc.

Evangelisation, the founding act of the mission, and its beginning and end, cannot be properly directed and really

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* Head of the ICCB's Permanent Representation to UNESCO, Paris, France..

The Role and Mission of the Laity

"The mission of the laity in the world has many complementary dimensions. It first of all requires that each one responds in his personal life to the call to sanctity that Christ pronounced (...) Your mission as lay people is to be the sign of the presence and the solicitude of the Church to the world. Hear the words of the Lord to the prophet Isaiah: *"Comfort, comfort my people, says your God"* (Is. 40:1). You are watchmen in the world to make known to the Church new pastoral perspectives and projects to respond to the urgent needs of our time. The Good News of the Gospel is a dynamic source of advancement for the whole human person both as individuals and in communion with others; promoting responsibilty in commitment and decision as well as solidarity with others throughout the world. The Church looks to you for this mission."

John-Paul II, Rome, 13 Dec. 1991,
General Assembly
of the Conference of ICOs.

effective unless it emerges in time for the «rendez-vous» with the signs of the times and the seeds of health.

To find and recognise them, they must first of all be identified: this is a permanent precondition for any mission: it is never finished once and for all - it must always be renewed.

The calling : hearing and meeting

The Word of God comes to mankind through events: Christmas, Easter, Pentecost. These events bear the Word, the Good News which enlightens and saves. But like yesterday in Palestine, the Word of God can only be received today through events in the everyday lives of men and women. To express this Word, anyone announcing the Good News, anyone spreading the Gospel, must allow these events **to resonate within him: they are the «signs» of «this» time and the seeds of salvation for «this» time.**

The symposium participants allowed themselves **to be challenged** by these «signs» and «seeds». For, as they were repeatedly told, today - as in the past - evangelisation entails accepting the impact of «real life experience». This real life experience will only be genuine for us if we personally encounter it. To fully understand the signs of the times we need to accept their provocative nature.

This idea of provocation was proposed by a theologian from Cameroon, Jean-Marc Ela, who considerably impressed the participants. Today the Gospel can only be proclaimed through the reversals of history, which is the logic of the Incarnation. The world today is not primarily divided between the faithful and infidel, but rather between the rich and poor, between those dying from «excess» and those dying from «want».

One cannot experience the Faith if one is isolated from the major problems of society. The «words of Faith» disappear if cultural aspects only are taken into account. Anyone who does not commit himself to the social field before announcing the Good News will be proposing an inaudible Gospel. The Gospel itself - «commandment of love and civilisation of love» - imposes a liberating vision on evangelisation: this is the challenge that must be taken up.

To spread the Gospel among the poor, one must first of all allow the poor to evangelise us and we must listen to their call. **Evangelising means going where creation suffers.** It means involvement in dynamic actions where bold programmes are prepared to help societies seek an alternative way of life. It is a vital condition to ensure that the Gospel is credible.

Evangelisation means rehabilitating the victims of history, using faith as a starting point. Evangelisation does not mean installing a Church from outside or restoring a Church according to a model. It means hearing the calls of the poor, meeting the appointments with the signs of the times, and meeting the Holy Spirit who breathes on the waters wherever he calls us. Only there can the Faith emerge, that which is enriched by the Holy Spirit.

Conversion : re-assessing and commitment

The third point of the symposium was the most «mysterious» one of all: the most internalised, the most intro-active, the most difficult one. In the light of the signs of the times and the seeds of salvation, announcing what is to come, how does one proceed with evangelisation? Three words were repeated and proposed to ICOs to announce the «conversion» of their evangelisation: verifying, training, dialogue.

◆ **Re-assessing**: should each ICO not agree to challenge itself, humbly and boldly, as suggested in the symposium proceedings. Each one must lucidly and courageously assess and criticise its study and research programmes, its promotional and educational actions in the light of the guidelines proposed during these discussions.

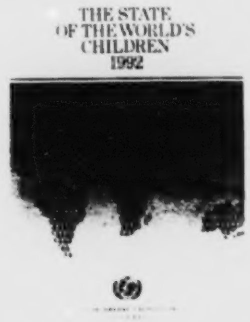
The real follow-up to the symposium will be assimilation, verification and conversion to ensure reorganisation and readjustment: this is based on our «evangelical honesty». Through the signs of the times and the seeds of salvation, God «leads us into Galilee». **He** is the Saviour. He hurries along our plans and ideas. God has the initiative: it is for us to meet Him wherever He invites us, wherever the **Spirit** appears.

◆ **Training**: If this renewal of Evangelisation involves conversion, then information and training are also required. «Announcing the Good News» cannot be improvised. Generosity cannot replace skill. Training lay people is a precondition for the credibility which ICOs will enjoy.

◆ **Dialogue**: the symposium provided an experience of tolerant, respectful dialogue. If the challenges facing Evangelisation at its appointments with the signs of the times and the seeds of health are properly identified and courageously assumed, this will lead to debates and, perhaps, tension.

The way to progress passes through humility and patience, understanding and dialogue, first of all «in Church» and also with every person of good will. ❑

■ *«The State of the World's Children 1992».* *UNICEF, Geneva, 1992.*



This report is issued at a time when the world order which has dominated the political and economic life of the 20th century is visibly dying. The report is offered as a contribution to the debate on the new world order which is struggling to be born. It submits 10 specific propositions: taken together they add up to a proposal that ending the absolute poverty of one quarter of mankind - the more than one billion people who still live and die with preventable hunger, disease, and illiteracy - should rank alongside the related issues of preserving the peace and protecting the environment as priority items on the agenda of that new world order.

■ **"Children in Danger"**. *Le Courrier de l'UNESCO. Paris. October 1991.*

The UNESCO COURIER
CHILDREN IN DANGER

The authors who have contributed to this issue, specialists from various geographical origins, have tried to understand the many aspects of the role of children in today's cultures and societies. Street children who are more urchins than scoundrels, children stressed and overwhelmed by the imperative of success at school, pampered and spoiled children deprived of any initiative, exploited children victims of broken families and of poverty, children in gangs involved in drug-trafficking, child domestic workers utterly at their employers' mercy, young rural working children or kids working in the "informal sector"... All these childhood situations are presented in this issue under the title: "Children in Danger".

Yet there are grounds for hope, also present in the issue : the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child, signed or ratified by 139 States in 1989, which materializes the growing concern of Member States: numerous individual initiatives that have filled in the gaps of the international programmes: the attitude of children themselves, who seem to live more easily than adults in multiracial societies: the more accurate and in-depth reflection on children which leads to the recognition of their right to self-expression not denying the role of parents but on the contrary, reinforcing it. The articles were written by adults: illustrations by children seemed the natural accompaniment.

Courrier de l'Unesco, 32, rue François Bonvin, F - 75015 Paris, France - Tel. 33-1 45 68 47 15.

■ **"Power to Hurt - Exploring Violence"**. *Joint Peace Education Programme of The Irish Commission for Justice & Peace and the Irish Council of Churches, edited by P. Rogers, Dublin and Belfast, 1991.*

The second module of the Post-Primary **Sedakah Peace Programme** was initially designed by practising teachers for the 13-15 age group and piloted in forty schools throughout Ireland. It comprises 10 units, each containing lesson plans for teachers and student worksheets which can be photocopied. This Peace Education programme is activity-based and includes writing, listening, talking, drama, role-play, debating, groupwork, research, project-work, surveys, interviews and reports. It should be particularly useful for teachers of English, Religious Education, Social and Personal Education, Civics, History or Environmental Studies. It will also provide useful material for Education for Mutual Understanding, North/South School Links, European World Studies and for working on English themes in the Junior Certificate programme. Module certificates are available for students who have completed work on modules of the Sedakah Series.

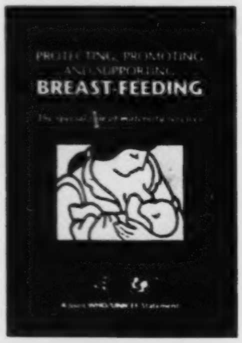
■ **"Orphelins du SIDA, une perspective communautaire en Tanzanie"** *(AIDS Orphans, a community perspective in Tanzania), C. Mukoyogo, G. Williams, coll. Strategies pour l'espoir, published by ActionAid, AMREF and World Need, United Kingdom, 1992.*

ORPHELINS DU SIDA

The World Health Organization foresees that by the year 2000 at least 10 million children under the age of 10 will have lost at least one of their parents due to AIDS. Tanzania is only one of a number of countries in which hundreds of thousands of children will be orphans. In the region of La Kadera, for example, there are already more than 35000 orphans under the age of 15. This brochure shows how families, communities, non-governmental organisations and governmental services are coping with the devastating impact AIDS has on the family system which is the basis of community life.

■ **"Protecting, promoting and supporting breast-feeding: the special role of maternity services"**. *a joint WHO UNICEF Statement.*

Breast-feeding is an unequalled way of providing ideal food for the healthy growth and development of infants and has a unique biological and emotional influence on the health of both mother and child. The anti-infective properties of breast milk help to protect infants against disease and there is an important relation between breast-feeding and child-spacing. For these reasons, professional and other health workers serving in health care facilities should make every effort to protect, promote and support breast-feeding, and to provide expectant and new mothers with objective and consistent advice in this regard.



The **1st World Breast-Feeding Day** will be celebrated on 1 August 1992. With the aim of making this day a success for the benefit of children, a free brochure, which has received support from UNICEF, is available in several languages from: World Alliance for Breastfeeding Action (WABA), 34-11 146th Street, Flushing, N.Y. 11354, USA - Tel and Fax. (1-718) 886-4423 or from: WABA Secretariat, P.O. Box 1200, 10850 Penang, Malaysia - Tel. (604) 884616; Fax. (604) 872655.

■ **"La volonté de choisir"** *(The strength to choose"). J.F. Laurent. Editions Ouverture. Le Mont-sur-Lausanne. 1991.*

A small ethical guide for our time. "To choose, is necessarily to renounce. It is to give up everything that is incompatible with the project I have chosen. *"If we do not give up anything, we can not have any preference, we do nothing, we are nothing. What good is it to be free for nothing?"* (J. de Bourbon Busset). It is easy to believe that certain persons are thus placed in an agonising situation. If young people or adolescents ask themselves questions concerning the sense to give to their life, or on an important decision to be taken, they should first of all listen to their conscience. If they do not receive a clear answer then they should be helped by a person with experience in whom they have confidence. Should I be consulted, I would suggest that they ask themselves whether the answer is not simply to be found in the word serve.

UNESCO protects works of art that are endangered. Is not the greatest work of art in danger today man himself, attacked in his survival, in his autonomy or in his dignity? Ecologists are engaged in a necessary combat for the quality of the environment: is it not rather a combat for man himself, for his liberty, to be free of all servitude?" (J.F. Laurent). This little book highlights the choices to be made in order that life may be lived to the full.

■ ***"Wie niet weg is, is gezien. Hoe beleeft het kind zijn gezin, zijn school en zijn vrije tijd"*** *(How the child sees his family, his school, his pastimes), K. Boudewijnstichting, Brussels, 1991.*

All too often adults talk of children or project their feelings on to children without any real knowledge of life as it is experienced by children. The group "Child and Society", within the King Baudoin Foundation in Belgium created for the promotion of respect for children in the framework of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, has started listening to children. It has entrusted the project to the Flemish service for open-air activities, an associate member of the ICCB. Children from 6 to 12 years of age were contacted through a page for children in the most widely circulated Flemish daily newspaper. There were 2375 responses! Some came from school classes. The answers in the different spheres of life are striking in that they are so well-balanced. The family, for example, is highly thought of by children inspite of conflicts and heartbreaks. Animals are often part of it: "We are 31: my sister, daddy, mummy, 27 rabbits and me". Family life gives a very strong feeling of "home", of an unconditional belonging which offers the child the security necessary for him/her to "digest" his/her experiences of life. In this sense, the disagreeable family conflicts are almost seen as a normal part of life. The children sometimes complain of the lack of availability of their parents who work too hard. While the family seems to be at the heart of a child's experience, school plays a more ambiguous role. The possibilities for having friends and playing during recreation periods are evaluated in a positive way, but homework is not appreciated. The children mention a total of 126 different activities as their pastimes. The TV is in first place, followed closely by reading, outdoor games, helping their parents. The ten favourite pastimes of girls and boys are the same with one exception: football for the boys and dolls for the girls.

Children's movements attract only between a quarter and a third of the children. The grandparents are listed under sparetime occupations: they and their homes offer a form of liberty that is greatly appreciated, without having to travel long distances. Many children's holidaytimes are very busy, particularly with attendance at all types of camps. *Available from : NDO, 32 rue de Spa, B - 1040, Brussels, Belgium.*

Documentary Film
Prize for Children's Rights

The ICCB will award the **Rights of the Child Prize** during the Third World Forum of Educational and Religious Video (Utrecht/The Netherlands, 19-24 October 1992) to be organised by the International Catholic Organization for Cinema and Audiovisual) OCIC. The prize is worth 5,000 Swiss Francs and will be presented to honour a **documentary film** which exposes the violation of children's rights as they are set down in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. A symposium entitled "Children and Video" will take place on 23 October, the date on which the prize will be awarded.

To participate in this contest, please write for an entry form: OCIC, 8 rue de l'Orme, B - 1040 Brussels, Belgium - Tel. (33-2) 734 42 94; Fax. (33-2) 734 32 07.

ICCB and OCIC are both members of the International Centre of Films for Children and Young People.

CONFERENCE CALENDAR

1. **Organising body**
2. **Type of meeting**
3. **Theme**
4. **Remarks**
5. **Address and telephone number for further information**

1992

22-24 June
Grenada,
Spain

1. Defence for Children International
2. International congress
3. "Policies for Children: Participation and Cooperation"
4. Languages, English, French and Spanish
5. Defence for Children International, Case postale 88, CH - 1211 Geneva 20/Switzerland - Tel. (41-22) 734 05 58; Fax (41-22) 740 11 45

24-28 August
Geneva,
Switzerland

1. Fondation Sommet Mondial des Femmes
2. World congress
3. Women's World Congress in support of Children's Summit Goals
4. Languages: English, French, Spanish
5. Women's World Congress, Hôtel Beau-Rivage, 13, Quai du Mont-Blanc, CH - 1202 Geneva/Switzerland - Tel. (41-22) 738 66 19; Fax (41-22) 738 98 47

6-11 September
Durham,
United Kingdom

1. Centre for Adolescent Studies (CAS)
2. '92 European symposium
3. "Problems and Prospects of Adolescents in the Nineties"
4. Language: English
5. 1992 Secretariat, Centre for Adolescent Studies, Aycliffe, Centre for Children, Copelaw, Newton Aycliffe, Co. Durham DL5 6JB/U.K., Tel. (44-325) 300101, Ext. 242

7-12 September
Berlin,
Germany

1. Arbeitskreis für Jugendliteratur e.V., Munich (German Section of IBBY)
2. 23rd IBBY Congress
3. "The World of Children in Children's Books - Children's Books in the World of Children"
4. In cooperation with the Gemeinschaft zur Förderung von Kinder- und Jugendliteratur e.V., Berlin
   Languages: English and German
5. IBBY Congress Office, Attn: Ms. Ingrid Baumgart, Weinmeisterstr. 5, O - 1020 Berlin/Germany - Tel. (372) 28 29 747; Fax (372) 28 29 769

22-24 September
Glasgow,
Scotland

1. United Kingdom Committee for UNICEF
2. Conference on children's rights
3. "Justice for Children"
4. Organised in collaboration with Save the Children and the University of Glasgow
   Language: English
5. Dr. Stewart Asquith, Centre for the Study of the Child and Society, University of Glasgow, Lilybank House, Bute Gardens, Glasgow G12 8RT/Scotland - Tel. (44-41) 339 8855 int. 4591; Fax (44-41) 307 8035

18-23 October
Venice,
Italy

1. World Federation of Therapeutic Communities
2. XV World conference
3. "The Family in the Society: Which Future?"
4. Languages: English and Italian
5. Secretariat of the Conference, Ce.I.S. Centro Studi, Via Marconi 21, I - 37122 Verona/Italy - Tel. and Fax (39-45) 8009174

iccb

The International Catholic Child Bureau (ICCB), founded in France in 1948, is an International Catholic Organisation grouping together organisations and individuals working for children in more than forty countries. The ICCB provides the means whereby all those concerned with defending children's interests can come together at the international level and join their efforts in the realisation of concrete projects for service to children.

The ICCB initiated the International Year of the Child (1979), and launched an international programme for street children (1982). The ICCB is active in various programmes at the present time:

- Psycho-social needs of refugee children
- Hidden handicapped children
- Street children and drug abuse
- Sexually exploited children (Prostitution - Pornography)
- Intercultural training of educators
- Children and media
- Child-to-Child (a health education programme)
- Medico-Educational and Psycho-Social Special Care

In all its programmes the ICCB takes into account **four essential dimensions:**

- Spiritual growth
- The family
- Intercultural understanding
- The rights of the child

The ICCB has consultative status with ECOSOC, UNESCO, UNICEF and the Council of Europe.

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Fax : 5982 /47 32 27

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Abidjan 01, **Ivory Coast**
Tél. : 225 / 22 87 07
Fax: 225 / 32 45 89

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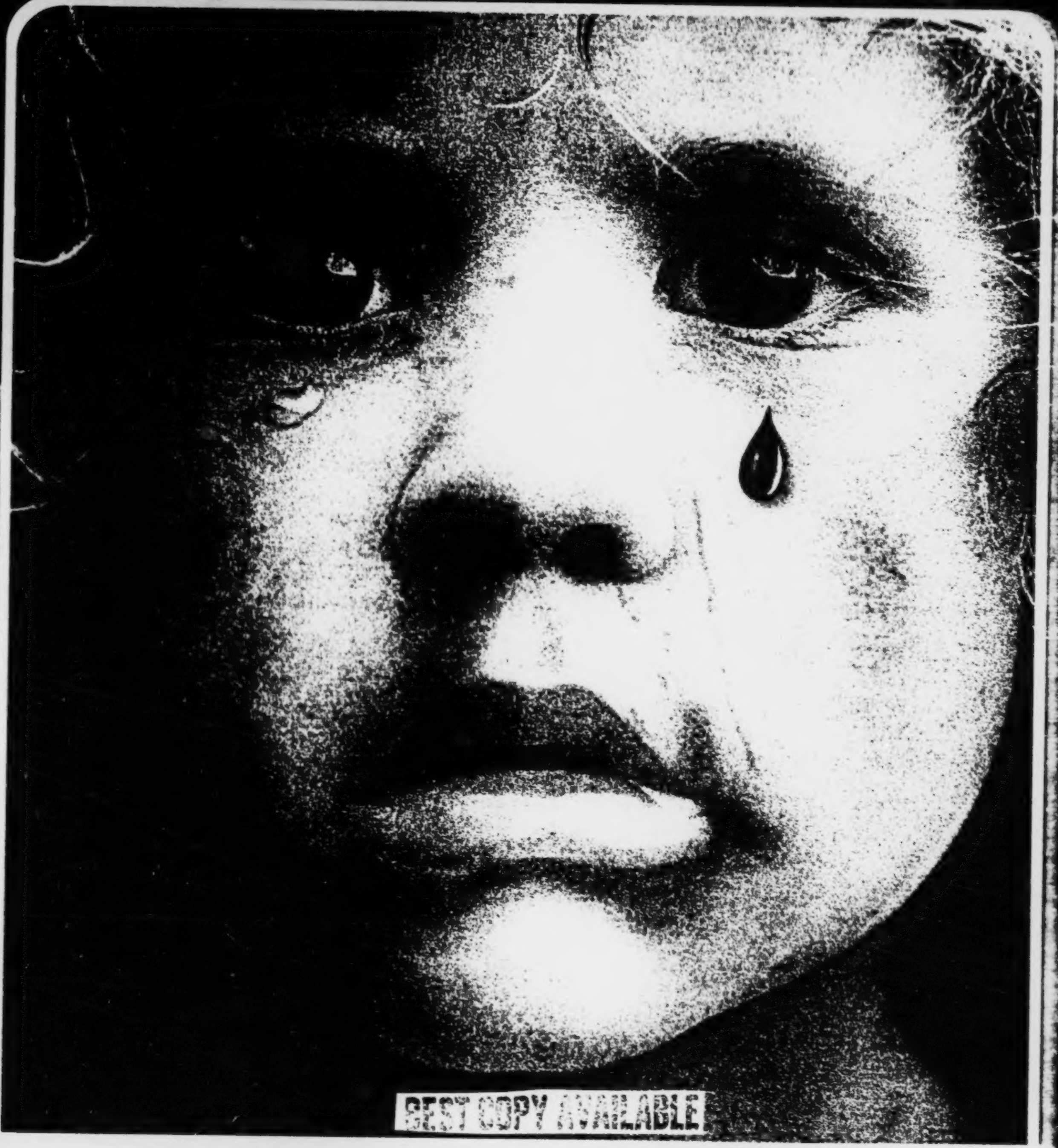BEST COPY AVAILABLE

CHILDREN SEXUALLY EXPLOITED

"Even if they are alive, they are dying within"

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C O N T E N T S

CHILDREN WORLDWIDE

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Children Worldwide is published in French under the title **«L'Enfance dans le Monde»** and in Spanish (by the ICCB Secretariat in Montevideo) under the title **«La Infancia en el Mundo»**. It appears three times a year.

Articles may be reprinted provided a credit line such as «from International Catholic Child Bureau - Children Worldwide» is used. The ICCB General Secretariat in Geneva would appreciate copies of any publications in which Children Worldwide articles are reprinted. The opinions expressed in the articles are those of the authors.

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The Sexual Exploitation of Children

Customs develop naturally in every age but evil also progresses from generation to generation, corrupting society with new and subtle forms of perversion that also affect children. Now, we are painfully studying, researching and writing about child exploitation and slavery, child alcoholism and drug addiction and **the sexual exploitation of children**. In Latin America, some 34 million children living on the streets are exposed to sexual exploitation because of their extreme poverty and promiscuity.

Promiscuity starts because most of the population are poor and most of the poor are children. Adults and young children live in intimate contact, with everyone sleeping in the same room. Children prematurely undergo sexual experiences in the family. Ketty, 14 years old, was raped by her stepfather when she was 11. Since then, she has been living on the streets, «earning a living from her body».

Adults abuse street children: such children easily accept invitations to go to the cinema or for a walk, and allow themselves to be caressed by adults in exchange for tips or presents... with the result that they become sexually dependent in order to survive.

As for the trade in child prostitutes, girls of 13 years old are taken from their villages and offered a place in work or at school, but in reality they are used as prostitutes for which they receive only their food in return.

What is happening in other Third World countries?

The fear of AIDS in the First World has led sex traffickers to establish prostitution centres consisting exclusively of "virgins" to provide sexual relations without any risk of AIDS. The prices are prohibitive, but the "customers" are many. The flesh trade in virgins and homosexual acts with boys are now regarded as new inhumane forms of preventing AIDS. Modern cesspits that surpass even Sodom and Gomorrah!

Groups of children have taken to the streets to earn a living in a new and genuine «informal children's community». They are the ones who are shouldering the social cost of foreign debt and the fashionable neo-liberal economic model. They form groups of their own, living like a **new child family**, the supreme rule being «solidarity in misfortune». If a child is in difficulty, the others help; if he has earned no money, he is given some; if a stranger asks for one of the children, nobody in the group says a word. This is the response of children to an adults' world of cold, egotistical calculations and cynicism concerning the exploitation of poor children. It is a response to the consumer-oriented materialism which has overlooked mankind and undermined human dignity.

The solution is not the creation of more children's homes. It ist to give them love within the family and dignity in society. Only on the basis of Christian anthropology and actions which given priority to children can the right paths be explored to resolve their problems - **for children and with children**, the favourites of Jesus.

Monsignor Luis BAMBAREN
Bishop of Chimbote, Peru
Expert on the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child.
Original in Spanish

Sale of Children

A United Nations Report

Vitit MUNTARBHORN

Prof. Vitit Muntarbhorn of Thailand, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children, submitted a substantial report* to the UN Human Rights Commission at the start of 1992. The report provides the most comprehensive overview to date of the problem as well as the solutions and strategies needed to eradicate the sale of children from the planet. Falling within the purview of his report is a discussion on the sexual exploitation of children in prostitution and pornography. Brazil and the Netherlands are the two countries to which the Special Rapporteur was invited to investigate the problems there. His recommendations are clear: more effective law enforcement, more community-based initiatives, programmes to strengthen the family and to prevent dislocation from rural to urban areas in general and then very precise measures for the different forms of exploitation to which children fall victim today.

It is to be hoped that Prof. Muntarbhorn will in his next report to the UN provide more information on those areas he has identified as insufficiently documented (e.g., sale of organs), and prioritise the recommendations he has made to states on the basis of the immediate measures that can be taken by all states to protect children, and to ensure that the specific responsibilities of all states (concerning law enforcement, police training, legal measures to criminalise the possession of child pornography, etc.) are not postponed under the pretext that the prevailing international economic climate does not permit such measures. A compilation of model interventions by States (for they do exist) would be helpful in this regard and would provide governments with ideas for taking the recommendations one step closer to realisation. Children have already waited too long.

Merciless torture

"Shabmeher was apparently taken from the house where she had been working as a maidservant by a female agent who subsequently sold her for 2 000 taka (approximately $60) to the Tanbazar brothel in Narayanganj. Refusal to comply with the wishes of the Sardanis ('madams') in the brothel resulted in merciless torture being inflicted on her after which she was found in an unconscious and miserable condition in a running train. Although her body was rescued, she died a tragic death at the hospital".

This incident in Bangladesh exemplifies the cruelties facing many child prostitutes today: it should not be taken as an isolated incident. The underworld in which girls and boys are immersed spreads its tentacles far and wide, across countries and continents. The issue is certainly not only that of the developping world but also of the developed world. There are transnational connections at work abusing and exploiting children, and ensuring that the issue remains opaque and elusive.

Vitit Muntarbhorn

Report submitted to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights, 48th session, Geneva, 1992. Ref: E/CN.4/1992/55

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 34

State Parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse. For these purposes States Parties shall in particular take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent:

(a) the inducement or coercion of a child to engage in any unlawful sexual activity;

(b) the exploitative use of children in prostitution or other unlawful sexual practices;

(c) the exploitative use of children in pornographic performances and materials.

Article 35

States Parties shall take all appropriate national, bilateral and multilateral measures to prevent the abduction, the sale of or traffic in children for any purpose or in any form.

The range of child prostitution varies from individual cases to mass victims of organized crime. This may encompass a selection of children, some runaways from home or from State institutions, some sold by their parents, some forced or tricked into prostitution, some street children, some part-time and some full-time, some amateurs and some professionals. Although there is an increase in the number of young boys engaged in prostitution in various parts of the world. The most disquieting cases are those who are forced into the trade, particularly girls. This is subject to the following qualifications pertinent to Europe and North America: *«Girls are not all necessarily simply forced into prostitution, for some may themselves be on the look-out for a pimp while the pimp in turn is on the look-out for a girl. They often meet through friends or acquaintances»*.

However, many cases have arisen, particularly in Asia, where untold cruelties have been inflicted on child prostitutes ranging from incarceration to homicide.

The types of sale and trafficking include the following:

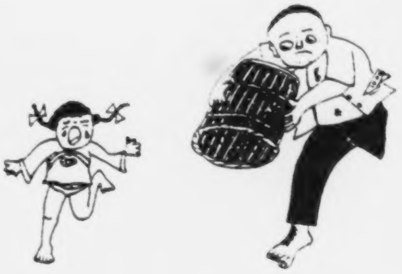
◆ Procurers and criminal organizations sell children to brothels either in a county or abroad.

◆ Procurers and criminal organizations supply children to clients.

◆ Individual paedophiles acquire children for their own use.

◆ Paedophilia organizations acquire children for their members. (§146 to 148)

As a whole, it may be said that the numbers are highest in Asia and Central/South America. (...) There are also reports of an increase in child prostitution in Africa, North America and Europe. However, the problem is to be found everywhere, and bearing in mind the demand and supply in regard to transnational prostitution, the issue is relevant to all countries. (§152)



National scenario

According to information received, sex tourism continues unabated in Asia, at both the national and transnational levels. Sex tourism involving local customers is often neglected in the press in favour of transnational sex tourism: numerically, however, there may well be more local people than foreigners who resort to the services of child prostitutes. (...)From the transnational angle, the customers come from many parts of the world, including Europe, North Anmerica and Asia, particularly Japan. (...) Throughout the whole region, paedophiles from far and wide come for sexual services, at times under the cloak of charitable organizations. These paedophiles often link up with local agents.

Countries of the Middle East tend to deny that the problem exists in the region. However, it is reported that some citizens of these countries travel to other countries in search of sexual services. This is evident in South-East Asia.

In the developed regions of Europe and North America, economic considerations, domestic violence and abuse, family disintegration and drug addiction are increasingly recognized as factors leading to the increase in child prostitution. Organized crime is also involved. (§157)

Materialism and unabashed consumerism take an additional toll where spiritual values are neglected. Much of the exploitation of children arises precisely because material values have overtaken those which place a premium on human life and development. Shamefully, the human rights of the child may be violated because the child is viewed as a factor of production, as an investment for economic returns, rather than as an entity vested with substantive rights and inherent dignity. (§12) ❑

Definitions

- **"Child"** is defined by the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child 1990 as meaning "every human being below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier".

- **"Child prostitution"** refers to the sexual exploitation of a child for remuneration in cash or in kind, usually but not always organized by an intermediary (parent, family member, procurer, teacher, etc.).

(Vitit Muntarbhorn, United Nations Commission on Human Rights, 48th session, 1992)

In the last 3 years, the problem of the sexual exploitation of children through prostitution and pornography has gained worldwide attention. It is not just the advent of the AIDS pandemic which has put child prostitution on the international agenda, but also the growing body of evidence to suggest that child prostitution is on the increase worldwide and that there is a well-organised, international network of flesh-traders.

Reviewing Strategies

Florence BRUCE*

The number of children involved is impossible to determine with accuracy. It is nevertheless generally accepted that there are several hundred thousand children under the age of 16 years in prostitution in Thailand and a slightly smaller number in the Philippines. In Sri Lanka, where the children involved are mostly boys, a figure of 10,000 and 20,000 children is usually quoted. Several thousand young aboriginal girls have been kidnapped to work in brothels in Taiwan and according to ECPAT there are growing numbers of children in prostitution reported from Vietnam, Cambodia, China and other Asian countries.

Few people today would have difficulty in identifying the sex tourist destinations of the world: Dominican Republic, Thailand, Sri Lanka, but often overlooked are the countries and cities where children have to work (occasionally or regularly) in prostitution to make ends meet: Uruguay, Chile, Peru, India, Bangladesh, Mauritania, Cote d'Ivoire, Zaire, Tanzania, Rwanda, London, Bucharest, Hamburg....

The sexual exploitation of children is a worldwide phenomenon touching Mother Earth's greatest natural resource - her children.

Normally portrayed as an urban phenomenon, child prostitution is present in rural areas too, for example in India or Thailand for local men - but also in those areas where logging, goldmining, or major development projects bring large numbers of labourers to rural areas.

The causes are well-documented now but they are complex and interlocking. Hence any strategy to address these causes will have to be multipronged, interdisciplinary and planned on a long-term basis.

There are 4 main roads which need to be travelled at one and the same time:

Prevention in the community

When education espouses basic human rights and gender equality attitudes towards children, especially girls, will change. As yet there is much in the formal school system and in society at large that counteracts these basic human rights tenets. Nevertheless, by working on the community systems and relationships surrounding the child we will begin to change attitudes towards women and children. A step in this direction are the efforts targetted at mothers at risk to support them in their child-rearing roles. Similar efforts need to be made toward men but examples of this are as yet few and far between.

Other community-based programmes for communities at risk focusing on identifying and training respected people in communities (the para-professionals), including young adolescent mothers and children formerly in prostitution as resource persons, the child-to-child approach to promote responsibility in children, and discussion in the community on the dangers to children (street theatre on the AIDS problem is known in several countries), as well as the penalties for abusers, are innovative ways of building up preventive strategies; strengthening the innate resilient coping mechanisms of children and families at risk is another area where much is yet to be done.

In terms of formal education, the Kamla programme in Thailand is one of the rare efforts to bring child prostitution out of the closet and into discussions in the formal school system.

Rehabilitation: An analysis

There are many projects throughout the world which cater for street and abandoned children, some of which give special attention to children who have been through prostitution as a survival strategy. There are other projects especially designed for child victims of prostitution such as emergency shelters, drop-in centres in prostitution areas and institutionalised rehabilitation projects; some, though few, have half-way houses into the community to promote reintegration. The latter usually reach out to very few children, are selective in their intake and help the most "helpable" among the sexually exploited children. There are so many more who do not thrive in such projects which is why there is a great need for more community-based projects.

ICCB surveyed 50 of these projects across the world catering for such children but many of these projects have difficulties in reconciling the children with their families and many admit to a large "failure" rate to the extent that 20-30% of the children return to prostitution after spending time in the project. After-care services are

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Director of Programmes, ICCB, Geneva, Switzerland.

generally lacking and they are unable to help children find or to keep a job after leaving the project.

Improved programming in terms of direct service projects must focus more on the integration of the project in the local community, the involvement of the community in the project design and implementation, comprehensive services, flexible professionals, the access to the job market and the accompaniment of the young people beyond the confines of the project.

The law and those who are supposed to enforce it

As for legal measures, the international conventions exist - often the national legislation exists too but is not enforced. Corruption is rife and, as the UN Special Rapporteur on the Sale of Children highlighted in his 1992 report on Brazil, police are underpaid and protection of children is not necessarily a priority for them. Coordination of police efforts is ineffectual. A national focal point mechanism, free of corruption, would help to put order in the chaotic world of law enforcement with regard to crimes against children as would special police units with the participation of women and social workers.

Interpol has recently taken a firmer stand in regard to crimes against children including sexual exploitation and it is to be hoped that they will take up some of the recommendations of the Special Rapporteur. They have recommended the compilation of statistics, human rights training for police officers, greater collaboration with other professionals dealing with children and active enforcement of laws prohibiting child prostitution.

Creating outrage: National and international campaigns

If depletion of the earth's resources can move the world, why can't the plight of children today? The answer lies perhaps in the fact that voluntary agencies have been unable to harness the evident goodwill of the public to put pressure on governments to act to change the situation of the children in the world.

A notable exception is the ECPAT campaign which brings together countries of the north and south in a joint strategy to stem the tide of sex tourism to Asia. But campaigns are also needed at local, national and regional level, not only to transmit the basic message that children are not for sale, but to publicise the penalties for and the means to report crimes of sexual exploitation of children.

ICCB: Designing regional strategies

Two regional seminars were held in the course of 1991, one in Latin America and one in collaboration with IAF and ENDA in West Africa. Together these meetings have widened our knowledge of the problem and led to think tanks on the issue to design regional strategies. In Latin America, for example, ICCB is organising technical meetings on programmes for child victims of prostitution, evaluating pilot projects currently underway, and network-ing and lobby-ing with the various social actors in-volved in work with child victims of sexual exploitation.

An ICCB book on the rehabilitation of sexually exploited children in the world

L'EXPLOITATION SEXUELLE DES ENFANTS
COLLECTION LES ENFANTS DU FLEUVE

ICCB presents in this publication the wisdom of field-workers with long experience in the above field. Each of the 50 profiles records the history and development of the project, the activities underway and present resources, as well as the project leaders' evaluation of efforts thus far.

"The Sexual Exploitation of Children - Field Responses", available from the General Secretariat of ICCB, Geneva

With regards to international campaigns ICCB is a consultant to the ECPAT campaign and ICCB offices in France, Belgium and the USA are taking leadership roles in helping ECPAT reach out to the public and policy-makers in those countries.

ICCB's next task is three-fold:

◆ an Asian think tank on the issue is under preparation;

◆ to bring together international agencies trying to "deal with" the phenomenon of the "sexploitation" of children in order to find a conceptual framework for policies and programmes in this field (in this regard the newly-adopted UN Programme of Action is a welcome move); and,

◆ to find ways of harnessing the knowledge and experience of ICCB's programme with refugee communities to help build up the resilient coping mechanisms of children and families at risk.

An ICCB Approach: Touching the intangible

The latter task is where we hope to sketch an ICCB approach for future programming for children in especially difficult circumstances. In the aftermath of prostitution or in the face of incredibly high risk factors, some finely-tuned community-based therapeutic interventions would be appropriate in addressing the non-material needs of children, such non-material needs being self-esteem, confidence-building, self-respect, tolerance, solidarity, as well as cognitive skills to enhance child development.

How to identify community skills and resources? Who are the child's role models in the community? Are the project's aims those of the children, family and community? Are parents and children active participants in the programmes? What are the positive forces within the child, family and community? How do children see their own situation and the solutions to problems? All these are the questions often not asked when working with children and communities.

Such an approach is vital to any development strategy which seeks to "empower" communities. For it is only if urban families at risk are empowered to take things into their own hands that they can claim their human rights while waiting for the political decision-makers to decide - at their political convenience - to address the needs of urban families. And only in this way will change on a major scale come about. ❑

Why Did They Start Operating as Prostitutes?

Adolescents tell their stories...

Laurence KACOU*

In the course of her work, L. Kacou, has often come into contact with adolescents who resorted to prostitution.The girls talked to her about their experiences and the reasons why they decided to accept «clients». The story of their lives reveals to us their psychological needs and the situations that intensify their problems.

◆ BN (16 years)

«My parents separated and split the children: my younger brother left with my mother and I stayed with my father.

Then my father married again, but his second wife couldn't stand me. One day, she turned me out. I was 12 years old. I asked for money from adults and I came to Abidjan all alone from over 100 kilometres away.

First of all, a man took me home to be his «girlfriend». But after a while, his wife insisted that he throw me out.

Then I followed a friend to Adjamé. Her mother found «clients» for us. She fed us, gave us advice, looked after us and kept part of our earnings. She didn't want us to sleep at her place when we didn't have a customer for the night. I left because one day she put drugs in my drink and I fell asleep. When I woke up the next day my money was gone.

She wouldn't admit that it was she who had taken it. I lost all my savings.

Now a «big sister» looks after us and gives us advice.»

◆ TD (16 years)

I went to school up to CE2. Then my father lost his job. To survive, I had to sell oranges. But you don't earn anything doing that. So I decided to do the same thing as my friends: I «took clients». I was 11 years old then.

I slept in cinemas. A friend told me about L.... in Treichville. I went to see him. I stayed with him for a while - I was his girlfriend. Afterwards, as there were a lot of us, he took another girlfriend and sent me to the public park at night to «pick up clients», like the others, to earn money for food and a place at his house.

◆ T. ROKIA (18 years)

When I was small, my mother and father separated. My mother left with my little brother and left me with her big sister here in Koumassi (a district of Abidjan). At the age of 11 I ran away because my aunt forced me to go to school and I didn't want to.

First of all, I took 50,000 francs from her to try and get to my mother in Bouaké, but I couldn't find her. So I went on to Katiola to my grandmother's. But my aunt insisted that I should be brought back to Koumassi. There I sometimes stayed away from the house for weeks at a time. Then one day I followed some friends who took me to a «big sister» in Treichville. She took care of me: she fed me and gave me advice.

One day she asked me to «take a client» to earn my food and lodging. I was 12 years old then. She told me not to be afraid, that she would explain to me what to do. Then she took me to a doctor who examined me, and she bought vitamins for me. After that, I «took clients» every day for three years.

Then I met a boy who took me as his girlfriend. From time to time, when he has no money, I go to the bars and pick up clients.»

We can see from these accounts that there are several factors that encourage children to enter prostitution:

- the break-up of the family, causing children to be abandoned
- the loss of work by the head of the household, causing poverty for the children and forcing them to go out into the streets to look for their food. Once in the street, these children are preyed on by pimps looking for young people for their clients.

The pimps profit from the situation: these children in the street need recognition, protection and security. For a young girl who has left home and is in distress, this environment offers her the feeling of belonging to a community, so she is no longer alone. The welcoming attitude and attention the pimp lavishes on a child wins her confidence and she begins to become attached to him. Once confidence and dependency are established, the «Mama», «the big sister» or the «boyfriend» can ask the children to pick up clients to earn their bed and board. Abused in this way, children allow themselves to be exploited until they discover the greed of the pimps, then they return to the street. This seems to be a favourable time for them to accept rehabilitation ... if this is offered.

The authorities must establish social structures to help children in danger, as well as hostels and vocational training to provide the children with psychological balance and professional skills.

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* Clinical psychologist, ICCB Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. *Original in French.*

Urban Children and Young People in Difficulty

A participative approach

Djakaridja KONE*

African societies are undergoing rapid change. Africa currently has the fastest urban growth rate in the world. There is even talk of an urban explosion when referring to this rapid growth in towns. In some agglomerations such as Abidjan, Kinshasa and Douala, the population doubles every 7 to 10 years. By tradiition exceptional, child prostitution is increasing in modern society. A participative experience, where the children and young people are perceived as the protagonists of their fate rather than the passive recipients of aid, is being tried out in various African countries.

Young African people who have recently become town-dwellers have, in the space of a single generation, experienced two extremely important events:

◆ the predominant (quantitative) place they occupy in society which is becoming younger by the day (in every large town, over 65% of the population is under 25 years of age)

◆ The loss of their social function which was very well-defined in traditional societies (even if it was not as enviable as our nostalgic reminiscences would wish) and which has not found a replacement in the modern society where even young university graduates and - the supreme paradox - young doctors are unemployed.

It is difficult to give precise figures when talking about young people in difficulty. However, taking as a basis the numbers dropping out of school, the considerable increase in the number of children and young people exercising various activities in the street (in the broad sense of the word) and the level of juvenile delinquency, it can be posited that the vast majority of children and young people in urban areas have no prospects either within training (school or technical) schemes or in salaried employment.

Hence although being in the majority, these young people are marginalised by society. They harbour a significant amount of energy which can either help build or destroy society.

Children and young people trying to survive in the street are illustrative of the creative forces within the population but they are at the same time a reflection of growing injustice, misery and their effects : the eruption of urban violence. (...)

Children and young workers

They represent the vast majority of those immersed in the environment of the street. They may number tens of thousands in urban centres such as Abidjan. They are the outcome either of

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Psychologist, Consultant at the ICCB Secretariat in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire. Extracts from the paper given at the ICCB Seminar on «Children in an inter-cultural context», Birmingham, Great Britain, April 1992. *Original in French.*

migration and the population drain from rural areas, or by towns themselves which are generating an increasing number of street children.

They occupy all possible economic segments typified by very slight investments in services and small retailing outlets. (...)

Their position as workers takes precedence over their condition as children and, faced with the need to survive, many of them have waived their rights to childhood and become adults before their time.

They do not have any special status, do not receive basic services and very few development projects are aimed at helping them. A number of them (a minority) have broken off all links with their families. For others, these small jobs are a preparation for prostitution.

Their position as workers takes precedence over their condition as children and, faced with the need to survive, many of them have waived their rights to childhood.

The prostitution networks

Young girls are led into organised networks, notably based in villages in Ghana (neighbouring country) and are employed not, as expected, as «maids», but as «twotwos», the name used for prostitutes. «Two shillings» was their price, hence the nickname which reveals their origin: Ghana. These networks have mushroomed and the girls now come from the Côte d'Ivoire itself as well as the neighbouring countries. The effect of the war in Liberia should be noted in this connection: it led to many families fleeing their homes, absolutely destitute. Young boys, although in a minority, do not escape this fact of urban life. The borderline between odd jobs and prostitution is slight and fragile. Children forced to work to help provide for the family and who contribute a vital amount to the family budget, sometimes slip into this activity which is perilous for their health and education. Snapped up by the networks, feeling guilty for the destitution of their families, child workers become child prostitutes. Then they are caught up in the machine. Earnings are «easy» because they are often bigger than the children could obtain in another activity. This encourages them to continue if they are already being persuaded or even forced to do so by an «employer». Then the children are no longer entitled to their childhood: They become victims of everything that passes before them: drugs, AIDS, etc. These children are often dead before they have had the chance to live.

In Côte d'Ivoire and Black Africa in general, child prostitutes are an epiphenomenon, an exceptional occurrence. There are no charters of perverted foreigners: the demand is only slight, but even this is already too much. We must be vigilant, for this trend will increase, aided by the crisis in values and the precarious situation of families. This phenomenon is worsened by a difficult macro-economic situation and the structural adjustment plans proposed as solutions. Let us ensure that working children can keep their dignity, and remain vigilant about the many factors that give rise to child prostitution.

Traditionally an exceptional phenomenon, child prostitution is increasing in modern society, forming part of the new models created in particular by the proliferation of pornographic films which are easily available to young children. For

Are there alternative sources of income?

Programmes for the prevention of AIDS and withdrawal of young people from prostitution must confront the fact that there are so few employment opportunities for the young in poor countries worldwide. The risk of HIV infection or sexual abuse by clients are only secondary concerns for teenagers who have no choice but to remain in prostitution. Only when these young people have access to alternative sources of income equally as lucrative as commercial sex will they be able to protect themselves from physical harm and exploitation. Income generation and credit schemes for the young may have some impact at the local level, but small-scale interventions of this nature will not change the economic circumstances of the young nationally.

"Children of the Cities", Jo Boyden and Pat Holden. Zed Books Ltd., London and New Jersey. 1991.

the sum of 25 F CFA (10 cents), video clubs show such videos near schools, in poor districts and in shanty towns.

The precarious economic conditions, destroying social and cultural values, the increasingly well-organised prostitution networks and the urban models where ethical and moral values are often lacking will unfortunately lead to more and more children entering prostitution. It is high time we took action. (...)

In the field: a participative approach

In the participative approach, children and young people are perceived as the protagonists of their fate rather than the passive recipients of aid. Their initiatives are respected and supported in order to achieve progress. They are the leading proponents of their own development. Action must be performed by them and on the basis of their own observation and analysis of problems. The teacher or instructor must guide them in their search for a solution, in other words pass on to them the tools required for the action-research operation.

This participative approach is currently being tried out in 12 French-speaking African countries under an inter-African programme for training urban instructors, organised by Enda Tiers-Monde and supported by various organisations including the ICCB. A number of action-research operations have been initiated with children and young people in over 20 Western and Central African cities. This will lead to an African-based approach to programmes for urban youth. Following an initial session (Senegal) on the topic «the methodology of participation of children and young people in the search for solutions to their problems» and a second one (Côte d'Ivoire) concerning «the urban explosion as a source of problems but also of opportunities for the development of the child», the third session (Cotonou) dealt with «the right of children to development». What now remains to be done is to follow-up and then assess the action-research operations begun with these children and young people to find out what impact this has had on their lives. ❏

Let Street Children Take Responsibility

Experiences in Mauritania and Senegal

François LEFORT*

In Mauritania, I have treated 103 boys who were victims of only 7 paedophiles, practically all foreigners. This type of prostitution must have increased gradually since, in 1985, 57% of street children were aware of it and in 1991, 57% had experienced it. It is well known throughout the world that children with no families, living in the streets of large capital cities, are a special target for homosexuals.

Since 1985, we have taken care of two hundred and sixty children who have no families and are living in the streets. Exactly one hundred passed through our small houses. Of these, 94% stole regularly, 66% were on drugs, 57% had had sexual relations at least once with an adult for money.

We have had 7 failures: 4 died, one in prison, probably from AIDS, 3 because of drugs. Three are currently in prison, one of them for drug addiction. 93% are on the road to reintegration, including 57 young prostitutes.

For specialists, this is a surprising result. How did it happen?

A specialist in dealing with young people at risk, I left for Mauritania to work as a doctor in the desert, 600 km from the capital. I no longer wished to work with drug addicts and prostitutes. It was the young people who found me again, through the intermediary of street children. Every month I came back to the capital to look after victims. The street children came to me and I allowed them to come in order to treat them, but above all to talk to them. One day, they explained to me that the police often arrested them and put them in prisons where they were held with adults. In other words, they were being raped every night. The children asked me for a yard where they could sleep far away from the police raids. I found a place, then I went back to my job in the bush. The following month there were sand storms. The young people between 8 and 12 years asked me if they could build a small wooden hut. We agreed, provided there were no complaints from the neighbours. Understanding what lay in their interests, the young people organised themselves so that they would be accepted in the neighbourhood.

Six months later, they asked to be taught to read and write. It was a good idea. We looked for an adult who could teach them while living near them. This teacher, like most adults, wanted to give orders: the children ran away. I told him: «Either you find the children or you are fired». The children came back and laid down their conditions.

They continued to be responsible for organising the house, while the adult retained his prerogatives in the classroom. As they were at school, the children could no longer steal or work. We fed them and recruited a woman to do the cooking. Thus little by little a kind of family structure which the children had missed so much was re-established.

At the moment, there are six small houses of this kind in Nouakchott and St.Louis, Senegal, with no more than ten children in each. They can come and go as they please: this idea of liberty for former street children is vital if the project is to be successful.

We have only established three conditions for the children. The young people living in the houses must not:

- steal (or prostitute themselves - this is understood, not said in words)
- take drugs
- lie (on important matters).

Everything else is organised by the children themselves. The success of this is based on one principle: disaster victims know much better than international experts what is good for them. Our role is simply to help them distinguish dreams from reality.

> ***Disaster victims know much better than international experts what is good for them. Our role is simply to help them distinguish dreams from reality.***

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* Priest and doctor, Director Caritas, Mauritania. *Original in French.*

The Undugu Society of Kenya is a non-profit making organisation founded in 1973 by Father Arnold Grol with the purpose of enhancing the quality of life of Nairobi's street boys known as "parking boys". It soon became clear that the problem of parking boys could not be separated from that of street girls and child prostitution. The two had common sources in intolerable poverty and family disruption.

Street Girls of Nairobi

The impact of the Undugu Programme

Lynette OCHOLA*

The street work activities for street girls began in 1990 as a pilot project aimed at offering some solutions to the problem of child prostitution. The approach was to offer non-institutional counselling and rehabilitation services to street girls.

It is estimated that there may be as many as 50,000 children living in the streets of Nairobi of which 37% are girls between the ages of 8-18 years. With the slum population growing at an annual rate of 10% it is conceivable that this number will continue to grow.

In a way the problem of street girls presents a much more ominous picture than even that of street boys, largely because girls are much more vulnerable and face a higher frequency of sexual abuse and physical violence. They contract, suffer from and transmit sexually transmitted diseases and in the face of the AIDS epidemic, they represent a definite time bomb.

Society's view of these girls is relative and perhaps even self-defeating. To the authorities, they represent a menace which must be physically removed from the streets and put in jail or a remand home; to the public, they represent the lowest class of the human race, dirty and diseased and a source of embarrassment which must be avoided.

The street work project

The Undugu street work team works at three different levels: case work, group work, data collection.

◆ **Case work**: During each street visit, attempts are made to identify the girls' individual problems. On other occasions, the girls themselves volunteer information on what usually turn out to be acute personal problems. This often calls for crisis information. AIDS is already emerging as a problem requiring special attention because of the multifactional approach required to address it.

◆ **Group work**: The street work project operates largely on a group basis. Each street visit involves discussions with the girls in their own environment. On other occasions, it has proved equally useful to organise picnics and camping trips to take the girls to different settings.

Drug taking, glue sniffing, marijuana smoking, petrol sniffing, and alcohol abuse sometimes go hand in hand with prostitution. The street work team has realized that to break the cycle of children on the streets, it is important to break their dependence on these intoxicants through counselling.

Undugu is initiating a new strategy in which girls are rehabilitated within a cohesive community in which Undugu is working. A girl lives with a mother figure who has children close to the girl's age. Since the children on the streets lack a family structure, we can look to these communities to provide a surrogate family structure, and especially to the older women within those communities to fulfil the role of grandmother and to give guidance and advice.

◆ **Data collection** - street girls' survey: Even in its initial year of operation, the street work programme has seen a number of street girls attain various levels of rehabilitation. It became clear that a way of quantifying our results was needed so that trends could be monitored. For this reason, data collection is included as the third element of the project. It is intended that the administration of surveys be made periodically. This has already begun with the baseline survey carried out in February 1991. Forty street girls aged 8-16 years were selected at random and formed the basis of the study.

According to the results, close to 90% of them come from households where their parents are suffering from physically and verbally abusive relationships, alcoholism and the like. This is psychologically damaging to the child who must not only witness this abuse but is likely to have such abuse meted out to her as well.

Half of the girls originate from single-parent households; 75% of the girls come second or are the middle ones of the family. First-born children may feel more responsibility in the family and fear leaving their siblings behind. Last-born children may be lucky enough to have siblings who look after them so they feel less of an urgency to leave.

25 out of the 40 respondents have been to school but dropped out. The

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* Community Organisation Department, Undugu Society of Kenya. Excerpts.
For information: Undugu Society of Kenya, P.O. Box 40417, Nairobi, Kenya.

primary reason for dropping out of school was the inability to raise school fees. Six of the girls would like to go back to school or receive some sort of training.

Once they arrive on the streets, the girls find a place in which to station themselves or stay. Half of the respondents end up staying on the streets or behind hotels. 30% end up in "chuoms" which are groupings of children who stay in makeshift family units which include boys: these are often located in dark alleyways between buildings in the city centre. This illustrates that once on the street, the children still have a desire for a sense of belonging and safety that a family can bring. 90% of the respondents participate in income-generating activities, thus the primary factor for coming to the streets and remaining on the streets is to earn money. The activities that the girls are involved in include begging, prostitution and hawking. The income is spent on purchasing food and clothing.

While on the streets these children experience problems of harrassment from city authorities, physical and verbal abuse from other members of society. Half of the respondents have someone on the streets who they turn to in times of need. Most of them have permanent partners who are referred to as "husbands", these are often older street boys who offer protection.

68% of the girls have been in an official place of detention such as police cells, remand homes and similar institutions. They have experienced instances of being beaten, unsanitary conditions which have led to the catching of diseases and sleeping directly on the cold floor. The girls have, nevertheless, returned to the same practices which originally sent them there. Half of the girls say they still need to earn money, the rest do not want to go home because they feel that they have more freedom on the streets.

From the analysis, it is evident that the girls on the streets are faced with a multiplicity of problems. Undugu is especially concerned with looking into the problem of shelter because many children are unwilling to return home to situations of abuse, overcrowding and poverty. Undugu will continue to focus its efforts on the community in a bid to increase the community's awareness of the dangers faced by their children.

It is also important that communities from all socio-economic sectors of society are informed of the problems of the poor, and especially those of children in difficult circumstances who should not be treated with disdain but with understanding, respect, and given assistance whenever possible. ❑

Education for girls

A human right, a social gain

Anne BUNTING*

The NGO/UNICEF Working Group on Education sponsored a conference, April 21-22 1992, on Education for All Girls - A Human Right, A Social Gain. Approximately two hundred and seventy-five participants drawn from NGOs, governments, donor agencies and educational institutions assembled to develop plans of action and close the gender gap that exists in many countries throughout the world.

The statistics concerning children, young girls and women present a harsh reality. Two-thirds of the one billion illiterate adults are women and two-thirds of 130 million children who have no access to primary schools are girls. It is also a commonly held perception that more than one million girl babies died from starvation, neglect or abuse just because they were born girls. With this in mind, the NGO Committee delineated objectives for the Conference, among them were the following:

◆ To raise the consciousness of national and international NGOs, international agencies, governments, organizations, funding agencies and religious groups to create awareness of the potential for equal access of girls as a precursor to equity in cultural, family and economic life.

◆ To heighten the awareness of the significance and impact that early childhood has on a girl's total development.

◆ To develop a statement of principles for NGOs to discuss and adopt a call to action which details the issues and priorities which inspire NGO action.

◆ To develop appropriate advocacy strategies for NGOs to ensure that political and social will is translated into action.

Particular attention will be given to the role of men as advocates for equity in their roles as husbands, fathers, leaders of thought and wielders of power.

Mr. James Grant, Executive Director of UNICEF, noted that the moment was right for action with the peaceful revolution for children reflected in three major events: The Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Jomtien Conference and the World Summit for Children.

The political will for change at top levels of government must be accompanied by the willingness to change on the grass roots level of parents and communities. Education for change must begin in the family and the necessity of involving men in promoting this change is of the utmost necessity for they are a major part of the problem and must therefore be part of the solution.

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The State of Pernambuco, in the Northeast of Brazil, suffers from the ill effects of a well known enemy of Third World countries: poverty and its ally, suffering. It is in this world of people weakened by hunger, illness and lack of opportunities, that the most fragile members of this system - the girls - suffer oppression. 62% of girls living in the street commit suicide or are brutally murdered. Few live to be 25 years old if they stay on the streets more than 10 years. Casa de Passagem (Halfway House) is a programme of the Brazilian Centre for Children and Adolescents: a non-profit organization with the chief goal of defending the social, civil and human rights of children and adolescents.

Building Self-Esteem

Ana VASCONCELOS[*]

At the start of our work with teenage and pre-teenage street children in 1986, we realised the difficulties educators had in working with girls. We went to the streets to find them and listen to them. We wanted to understand, in their own words, the children's distress at premature womanhood. Dinha is eight. She has been on the street for a year. She told us, "I was a woman before I grew into a girl." The street girl knows she is a woman before she has finished being a child, before she has entered her teens.

The girl who goes out on the street is almost certain to end up as a prostitute. In her own neighbourhood she is taken by force, on the street she will be raped repeatedly.

The girl who stays at home and has her family to protect her is the good girl. The girl on the street is there for anyone. No matter what her age is, she is a woman. And that is her greatest fault: having a woman's body. On the street, a woman's body belongs to any man.

An educational space

Casa de Passagem is a shelter for girls and adolescents aged 7-17 years who live on the streets of Recife. It is also an educational space open to the street, community, school and job market.

In the house, however, there are rules, schedules and limits. The girls take part in the elaboration of these rules and they pledge to respect them. Both girls and educators discuss the routine of Casa de Passagem and the difficulties which arise. The girls speak about their specific difficulties and together they take decisions.

The main concern of each educator at Casa de Passagem is to increase the girls' positive self-awareness and to care for their health, both of these have been denied or neglected by the external adverse circumstances: poverty, family, street, society, institutions.

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[*] Director of Casa de Passagem, Brazil.

The girls at Casa de Passagem. gradually begin to experience more positive feelings and start to value themselves for what they are. They begin to believe that they are able to transform themselves and transform their surroundings. It is a slow process but a sure one if well founded. In order to achieve this, the ability and contribution of all the educators who share the educational process with the girls is of great importance.

Casa de Passagem II is a teenage training centre. Opened in 1991, a first batch of youngsters determined to start their life over again took possession. Meanwhile, at Casa de Passagem I, newcomers are arriving every day. Rehabilitation is beginning again all the time.

At the second house, we are developing vocational workshops and a trade school so that the young girls may find regular work.

Assistance to families

In the interests of our project, we cannot afford to forget about the girls' families. We try to get in touch with their families to which they might be able to return. This is why we try to help the girls' mothers, whether with psychological support in therapy groups, or helping them to make or do something they can sell. We do all we can to get the girls to go back home, though we do not always succeed.

Many girls will stay on the street. Our census study showed that many girls who have been more than ten years on the street disappear. They are arrested, or they die. They die from venereal disease, they are sent to mental institutions, they die from abortion, or in childbirth, or they kill themselves. "66% of deaths among young people in Brazil are murders or suicide."

Street girls in Recife know that the Casa de Passagem is there. They are all aware of it in one way or another. For them the Casa de Passagem is a reference point. Girls over eighteen are disappointed that we cannot work with them. But they know it is there, if not in their daily lives, at least when they need it. They can come for help. We can refer them to doctors. We can tell them about AIDS. And we free them after wrongful arrest.

We run an SOS hotline, which has an attorney and a psychologist on hand to deal with emergencies, with violence and with wrongful arrest.

We have had to set limits to fit our own limits of funding and of practical and human resources. The country we live in, and in particular the region where we operate, put increasing constraints on our hopes and on our steps toward human dignity. ❑

Brazil : 500 000 young girls in prostitution

Brazil has 500.000 children in prostitution. This is the figure advanced by the Brazilian Centre for Children and Adolescents, an agency depending on the Ministry of Social Affairs. The situation is more serious still since prostitution is accompanied by slavery-like conditions. The newspaper "Folha de Saõ Paulo" recently published a series of impressive reports on prostitutiton throughout the country. The journalist Gilberto Dimenstein, with support from UNICEF and several national and international organizations, spent 35 days visiting the various regions of the "legal" Amazon basis to investigate the situation of children.

The traffic of young girls is a practice which is in widespread use and almost an institution in the "legal" Amazon basin" (61% of the national territory). After forced recruitment the girls become the slaves of the owners of bars or brothels. Neither the police nor the other agencies have anything to gain by stopping this trade into which girls are enticed as young as 9 years old.

Networks of professionals

As an example, the Cuiu-Cuiu police station in the town of Itaituba, receives a contribution each week from the owners of bars and brothels.

Rondonia, a region in the Amazon basin, is one of the main routes for the trafficking of child slaves. There, they become not only prostitutes but also drug carriers. Many are dependent on drugs and become indebted to their owners who provide them with cocaine.

Situated in the south of the Apama, the commune of Laranjal do Jari was set up among other things to provide the Jari domain, established by the American multimillionaire Daniel Ludwig, with prostitutes. The child slaves are taken there by boat.

Observers consider that recruitment has become an almost professional activity. And they state that the recruiters sometimes buy the girls directly from their family.

As victims of a lack of information and of men who refuse to use condoms, two million of them become pregnant every year. They are then often forced to use the most rudimentary and dangerous methods of abortion. Or they become mothers but are incapable of taking care of their children.

Many ministers, politicians and policemen have decided to act against child prostitution and slavery. A request has been laid before the legislative assembly requesting that measures be taken against the traffic in and prostitution of children in the Amazon basin.

(APIC, Fribourg, Switzerland, 24.3.1992)

Promoting the Development of the Whole Person

Cristina CROVARA*

The «Religiosas Adoratrices» of Colombia have, since 1972, taken up the cause of young marginalised girls in their country, with all that this represents: exploitation, injustice, violence. A recent publication relates in detail this experience, the most important stages of which C. Crovara presents here.**

It is not easy to compete with the groups running prostitution rackets. The existing economic system which, although negative, is consistent with its objectives and intentions, is organised and markets the products in demand while securing the «raw material»: children, young girls and women who have been produced, expelled and marginalised by «our» society.

Suitable assistance during crises experienced by young people working as prostitutes provides opportunities that should be availed of to create trust, a vital element to ensure that these young people may at some stage consider the alternatives proposed to them.

The psychological characteristics

The programme produces a systematic description of its experience, outlining the characteristics of young people involved in prostitution. Most of these are girls from families not properly structured or unstable in social and financial terms. The father figure is absent in some of the homes, and replaced by one or more stepfathers.

The family circle consists of a passive mother, generating confusion about the roles of the family members. The mother figure is inaccessible because she has to work or because of lack of interest. This produces feelings of rebellion, rejection and resentment towards the male-father figure. These young women are immature, impulsive and ambivalent. They are distrustful of the outside world, seeing it as the cause of their misery.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

Article 39

States Parties shall take all appropriate measures to promote physical and psychological recovery and social reintegration of a child victim of: any form of neglect, exploitation, or abuse; torture or any other form of cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment; or armed conflicts. Such recovery and reintegration shall take place in an environment which fosters the health, self-respect and dignity of the child.

The characteristics attributed to them in the report include: a liking for the unpredictable; a constant tension between fear and desire; a testing of themselves in the «client» relationship which gives them a measure of independence to decide whether or not to offer pleasure; curiosity about «others» which they would not be able to explore in other situations; their ability to handle loneliness and affection; a utilitarian view of male-female relations; inadequate handling of sexuality because of feelings of rejection of the male sex; an awareness of the emptiness of their lives; «apparently» easy money; flexible hours and visiting various places give rise to fanciful perceptions of a world to which they do not belong; anxiety and depression leading to alcohol and drug abuse so as to keep going when things are difficult; a gradual slide into complete addiction required of full-time prostitution.

The Colombian programme consists

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* Coordinator of the ICCB programme against sexual exploitation in Latin America. *Original in Spanish*

** «Programa de Promocion Integral de la Mujer», Religiosas Adoratrices de Colombia, UNICEF, Bogota, Colombia, 1991.

For information: Religiosas Adoratrices, Apartado Aereo 11522, Bogota, Colombia.

> **"Every child has a right to his or her innocence. This right is founded on the dignity and freedom of every person, created in the image and likenesse of God. Therefore, child prostitution violates the rights and dignity of every child involved in it. But this evil is not only a crime against innocence, justice and decency; it also strikes at the heart of the family"**
>
> *Mgr Trujillo, Pontifical Council for the Family. Excerpts from a message to the ECPAT Conference, Bangkok, 1992.*

of a series of strategic choices that demonstrate the flexibility of its action.

Although the experiment began in 1974, the community of Hermanas Adoratrices is part of a historical vocation that has its roots in 1800, when Santa Maria Micaela founded the order «to prevent the bad morals of prostitution». This is very important in that these nuns decide to enter this order, pledging to deal with a social problem which, as we will see later, is not simply a moral one.

Versatile programmes

In 1972, the community developed a process of reflection which led to questions resulting in the idea that as well as the work of protecting and controlling young people in high risk situations, it was also very important and valuable to establish rehabilitation activities on an open basis, very different from live-in assistance.

The Hermanas Adoratrices studied the social and pedagogical needs of the young people, discovering that the harm and effects of prostitution are not permanent, and leaving the clinical aspects for later, when the prostitutes considered these necessary. They believe that change is possible and this belief is reflected in the warm welcome and versatility of the programmes, transforming people from objects to participative subjects.

Most of these young girls and women want to ensure better care for their children than that which they themselves received. The programme takes account of this need and includes it in its global strategy of solutions for the different age groups requiring attention: preschool, school and adolescence.

Five stages of growth and development are pinpointed in the Colombian programme:

The first stage from 1974 to 1978 is marked by a preventive model - taking care of the children of prostitutes.

The second stage, in 1978, is a period of maturation and searching for alternatives, marked by a firmer commitment reflected in the methodology, where the re-educative and rehabilitative aspects are encouraged more than in the past, stressing the open-house experiences. This is when an alternative to prostitution was provided.

The third stage, in 1979, put the emphasis on the training workshops and a better insight into family problems. Tiny business projects are being started. Three rehabilitation homes have been set up for adolescents experiencing problems living with their families.

In the fourth stage in 1984, the quality of vocational training was improved and finetuned. Then came the strategies to cover the follow-up and professional, social and integral integration of women in a so-called «post-programme».

The fifth stage, from 1987 on, started with the setting up of a clothing factory where the women and young girls ended the apprenticeship cycle. The emphasis is on local and community work in the post-programme by means of groups of lay volunteers known as «Renacer» (to be born again) which provide support to the women and young girls in their integration into the community.

The persistence and dedication of the Hermanas Adoratrices and their assistants enabled them to develop a sound programme which at this very moment is facing up to the challenge of increasing its efficiency and ability to provide solutions.

Inter-Agency collaboration on the sexual exploitation of children

Six country studies in Central America on children in prostitution are currently supported by Unicef in collaboration with Childhope. Case studies on programme responses and lessons learned from NGOs worldwide working with urban girls and adolescents at risk are also being prepared by Unicef. Following these studies, an intercountry workshop on more effective programming for sexually exploited children will be organised early in 1993. ICCB has been invited to contribute its knowledge in this field.

These challenges may be summarised as follows:

◆ Search for methodological and technical processes which reinforce the self-management abilities of the young girls and women.

◆ Reinforcement of training of the programme staff to deal more directly with the family problems of adolescents.

◆ Better planning and coordination of different sections within the programme, and more systematic organisation of educational and rehabilitation processes.

◆ Coordination with other programmes to gradually weave a network of alternative support. ❑

A Path Towards Self-Worth and Dignity

Sister MICHELLE[*]

The women and children of Thailand, as in many other Asian countries, are often exploited or maginalized. Development takes place over their heads. The problems of children are immense. They are desperately in need of a mother's love, guidance and care - yet they are forced to interact in an adult world which in their experience is often twisted, warped and sordid. The Fountain of Life Center helps the children who are sexually exploited in their transition to another way of life.

Children: "living commodities"

The vast majority of the young people involved in the sex industry are forced into it by several factors including family poverty, abandonment by a spouse or by a guardian and disturbed backgrounds. An even more appalling phenomenon is that now some young people, especially those from deprived socio-economic backgrounds, begin to perceive the sex trade as an easy and quick way to earn money. They are welcomed by selfish and immoral customers who believe that having sexual relations with children can keep them young physically and spiritually.

The demand for children is even increasing because of the deadly AIDS epidemic. Many customers seek children in the belief that these "living commodities" are virgins and therefore free from disease.

A refuge

99% of the young people who come to our Center[**] got to know of it from their friends. Not only is the Center a place of learning where our young people can learn to read and write in Thai and English, learn dressmaking, health education and music, but somewhere just to come and be treated with dignity and respect - where they can be made to feel like real human beings - which they get little of from their employers and from the men they associate with. Most of them lack self-esteem and self-respect - and so to be treated as a normal person is sometimes hard for them to accept. Sometimes it brings on tears, but we do find they begin to relax around the staff and other students after a time. The Center is a refuge from all their troubles. Our young people are very much aware that they are at the "bottom of the pile". How often have we heard them say: "*I am no good - My body is dirty but my soul is clean - We are the scum of society - People say we are evil, because we spread AIDS.*"

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[*] Sister of the Congregation of the Good Shepherd, Pattaya, Thailand.

[**] The Fountain of Life Center opened in 1988 as an outreach center for the work of the Good Shepherd Sisters.

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Thailand : the "China Connection"

Nothing much ever happens in Jinghong, the small town in China's southern Yunnan province, near the Burmese border, where Zhang and Xiao grew up. The main entertainment for schoolgirls is twice-weekly gymnastic classes. Both Xiao, 16, and Zhang, 14, excelled on the balance bar. That saved their lives.

Shortly after 2 a.m. last September 8, they climbed out a fifth-floor window of the Wang Hong (Gold Palace) Hotel in downtown Bangkok and walked, tightrope-fashion, across a bamboo pole to the building next door. Their acrobatic escape after four weeks of life in a brothel not only ended their own odyssey from southern China to the flesh pots of Bangkok, it also helped to bare a new chapter - "The China Connection" - in the sordid history of slave trading in Asia.

Xiao and Zhang provided police their first concrete evidence that a network of slave traders is smuggling thousands of young girls and women from southern China and Burma to brothels in Thailand. Some, like Xiao and Zhang simply were kidnapped. Most, however, had been promised lucrative jobs as housemaids, factory workers and skilled laborers in Thailand.

Bangkok's deputy police chief, Col. Banya Charuchareet, heads a nine-member crime suppression division that has rescued 534 sex slaves since its formation only six months ago. He said that more and more affluent customers, enriched by Thailand's economic boom, are prepared to pay high prices for "fresher products," those less likely to be tainted with the AIDS virus.

Thailand tries hard to live down its image as the world's greatest sex haven, but even government ministers are forced to admit that the sex industry - with an estimated 2 million to 3 million prostitutes, a third of them children - ranks among the country's main money makers. It is estimated that 6 million Thai men visit a brothel at least once a month (...) A sex mafia consisting of police, senior officials, proprietors and procurers work together.

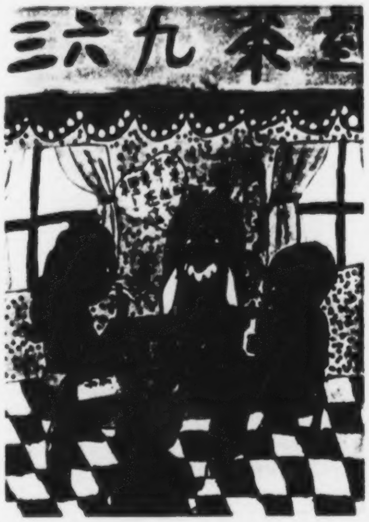
Uli Schmetzer, Chicago Tribune, 1992.

"...the place we are approaching is HOLY"

The staff know that to foster the girls' self-worth is far more important than teaching them Thai or English. The number of young people that come to the Center fluctuates, but on average, we have as many as 70 to 80 on a daily basis. At least half attend on a regular basis. These are our target group. The prolonged contact we have with them enables the Center to be a stronger force providing for change. We support the transitions they make in life-style and choices.

We are working on empowerment and personal growth helping our young people to develop the self-image and strength to grow beyond their present circumstances. This is slow and undramatic work! We do not often see the concrete results of our efforts. We do not see our young people leaving the entertainment industry en masse. However it is our sincere prayer and hope that through contact with our Center they will some day, each individual in her own time and way, make a decision to live an alternative life-style and so ultimately experience a new peace and happiness. As Bishop Kenneth Cragg wisely put it, *"Our first task in approaching another person, another culture or another religion is to take off our shoes for the place we are approaching is HOLY - else we may find ourselves treading on men's dreams. More seriously still we may forget that God was there before our arrival."*

Some of our members are as young as 9 and this year alone we have sent 15 young children to our Good Shepherd Center in Bangkok and other education centers in Bangkok, where they can complete their primary or secondary education. Some of them are doing professional dressmaking and hairdressing courses. We sponsor their education. Our own hairdressing teacher is a graduate from the Center.



"I want to go home. Don't force me into prostitution", a painting by a child from Taiwan.

Our close contact with these young people has made us realise that they are not the hostile, grasping and aggressive people they are often portrayed to be. Their faces are etched in misery and loneliness. Many of them have been victims of incest, child abuse or come from disturbed backgrounds.

We believe that our children are our nation's greatest resource. They are our link with the future and they are the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. ❏

For information: Fountain of Life Center, 463/49 Soi Srinakorn, North Pattaya, Pattaya City, Chonburi 20 260, Thailand.

Nanban: A Center for Street and Working Children

Fr. S. JAMES*

Touched by the plight of the vulnerable children and young people in the city of Madurai in South India and the injustice perpetrated against them, the De La Salle Brothers - India have come forward to promote care and concern for these unfortunate youth through the Nanban (meaning friends) project.

Nanban believes that none of its activities should become a kind of "charitable blanket" covering the disease in society which produces these children. Any activity undertaken on behalf of these children should help society to diagnose its disease. Nanban adopts three types of strategy to implement the services, namely a street-based approach, centre-based approach and community-based approach, promoting the prevention, protection and rehabilitation of street and working children. The two centres, one for boys and another for girls, act as catalysts for the transition from street to home or society. The target group is boys and girls under 15 years of age who work, eat and sleep on the streets only. If the life of a street girl is as difficult as that of a boy, she is nevertheless more vulnerable because she is female. Her life on the street is twice as exploitable and oppressive as that of a boy.

Working side-by-side with the laity

◆ **In the street.** The street educators go to the children in their places of work or hangouts to talk with them and establish the first link. The educator identifies the leaders among the street children and makes use of them as a reference point.

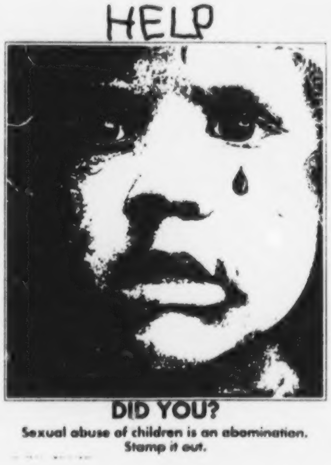
◆ **At the Centre.** Nanban has realised that mere provision of shelter will not solve the problems. Therefore the centre-based approach aims to:

- Check the immediate factors causing a self-destructive life-style.
- Instill confidence and create an awareness of the importance of basic ethical, spiritual and cultural values.
- Deal with the emotional needs of the street children and nurture their spiritual

Children of prostitutes

PRERANA, a voluntary organisation, has been working on the issues of the prostitutes and their children situated in the red light areas of Bombay for the past 6 years. It runs a night care centre for the children of prostitutes, accommodating over 60 children in a municipal school in Bombay. It has undertaken a project to shift the children of prostitutes away from the red light areas to different residential institutions for care and development. So far over 70 such children between the age of 6 and 12 years have been institutionalised all over the State of Maharashtra. PRERANA is also committed to the cause of eliminating the practice of child sexual abuse and has recently launched a poster campaign on child sexual abuse.

Address: Kamathipura Municipal School, 7th Lane, Shukhlaji Street, Kamathipura, Bombay 400 008, India.


HELP
DID YOU?
Sexual abuse of children is an abomination.
Stamp it out.

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* Director of Nanban. Annual Report. Excerpts. For more information: Nanban, 7 Goods Shed Street, Madurai 625 001, S. India.

dimension giving a true sense of meaning and hope.

◆ **With the community**. Nanban aims to build a movement towards meaningful social and political action, capable of challenging situations that leave children abandoned on the streets. It is an active campaigner on a wide range of child-related issues. Nanban attempts to influence government policy and legislation in favour of street and working children and their rights. In an attempt to involve the society at large, especially the young, a youth for youth programme has been initiated by the Centre.

Nanban's achievements

Within a short time, Nanban has been able to assist 950 children. Some of them come from Madurai city but the majority have migrated from various districts and from neighbouring States. Through the following programmes, Nanban has to date succeeded in:

-Home placement: restoring 485 children to their parents; contacting the parents and follow-up is done for 64 children.

- School placement: 47 children in the schools; 7 boys in the technical institutions; 10 children in a free boarding school and 11 children in the foster children programme.

- Job mobility: 81 children have been initiated under this programme. The job mobility scheme sponsored by Nanban has started paying dividends. With a capital investment of Rs. 25/- the children are sent out with goods for sale. This has infused a sense of confidence among them and there is a spectacular change in them. Those who earlier shunned water are now having regular baths and are wearing clean clothes, to look presentable. This is not a step by step programme but rather an inch by inch programme.

Staff improvement programme

A regular staff improvement programme is organised to bring the staff to a better understanding of their responsibility and to strengthen their commitment. Field exposure in other states has been provided and the staff has had several chances to attend seminars and workshops at national and state level. Every Saturday, the staff meets for an internal evaluation which is done on 3 levels: administration, staff and programme.

A principle guiding us in this work should be flexibility. We have to be flexible, i.e., capable of changing and adapting, because the societies in which street children live are constantly changing as a result of internal and external developments and we must in turn respond to these changes if we are to provide relevant assistance. The dialogue between staff is useful only if we are willing to evaluate our work, renew our approach and even drastically change it if it does prove to be beneficial to the children. Our exchanges should lead to regular updating of our work as we continue our attempts to find better approaches to dealing with the problem of street children. ❑

Free Trade Zone, Sri Lanka

Young female workers forced to give sexual services

Up to 70,000 young female workers are employed in the Free Trade Zone (FTZ) in Sri Lanka. It is situated very close to Colombo International Airport to make it easy for the investors to export products manufactured in the Zone. Many items like shoes, electrical parts, etc., are manufactured for export, but the main export produce is garments. The female workers are about 18 and over. Some are reportedly younger - the ones who are used for sexual purposes. 90 per cent of these women are unmarried. They are drawn from many villages along the West Coast of the island (often 200 to 400 km. away from the FTZ), and the majority live in lodging houses offering mean boarding facilities to the girls. They quickly lose contact with their own families except for the remittances of money they send to them.

Their salaries are small, most girls drawing only about 25 to 50 US Dollars a month, working six days a week. Out of this as much as 60 per cent would be spent on rent and food. And yet accommodation available is a room 10 ft sq. in which 10-12 have to live.

In the factories the girls have to keep almost unattainable targets of production,face frequent assaults from supervisors, sexual assaults by male workers, factory staff, employers and managers, regimentation and forced overtime when orders are heavy. On such days the work time extends up to 8 p.m. and many girls are molested and raped after work as the roads to their boarding houses are insecure.

Factories in the FTZ come under no body of law in the country, and under no restrictions or labour laws that exist in Sri Lanka. Japanese and Koreans are the main investors and a segment of the female work force are forced to give sexual services when needed. Sexual exploitation by local and foreign managers is also well-known but girls who complain or refuse to permit sexual overtures are dismissed from work and/or threatened and physically assaulted. There is no source of redress. The community in the neighbourhood while providing accommodation facilities distance themselves completely from this sub-culture and refuse to take any responsibility for the girls and for what happens to them. Abortions are common and rapes are frequent. Little health care is given.

Intervention Programs for Street Girls

Coordinated by Childhope Asia, with the support of UNICEF, the Regional/Workshop Field Study Visit on Intervention Programs for Street Girls including Victims of Sexual Exploitation was held in Manila, Philippines (April 6-11, 1992). It generated the participation of 30 policy makers, managers and staff of programs for street girls from Bangladesh, India, Indonesia, Malaysia, Taiwan, Thailand, Vietnam and the Philippines. Four street girls of Manila also attended to participate in the discussions.

Nine agencies directly working with street girls and victims of sexual exploitation were visited by the participants to give them first hand information and experience on the different programs and services available to street girls in Metro Manila. Street exposure also provided the participants with information about the work of street educators and outreach workers who work late at night and into the early morning hours.

The workshop discussion on intervention programs to respond to specific issues identified the major issues: poverty, disintegration of the family unit, politics and legislation, population growth and control, unemployment, and public awareness. During the conference, the participants were able to:

- Observe programs, share and exchange experiences on specific strategies and techniques in working with street girls and victims of sexual exploitation;
- Formulate a plan of action for mobilization in their respective countries to include advocacy, information and communication, situation analyses, program development and technical assistance;
- Develop/strengthen linkages among policy makers and programs managers working with street children and street girls in Southeast Asia and some countries of South Asia.

The proceedings of the workshop/field study visit can be obtained at Childhope Southeast Asia, 759 J.P. Rizal, Makati, Metro Manila, Philippines - Tel. (63-2)58 35 37 - Fax. (63-2)521 72 25.

Philippines: The throwaway children of the US 7th Fleet

The educated and the enlightened Navy people shed few tears for the love-sick sailors as the carrier force of the 7th Fleet sailed away from Subic. They knew it was long overdue.

Neither did I shed any tears. My tears are reserved for those left behind: the abandoned Filipino-American children who will grow up wondering why their fathers left them without support or love. I shed tears for all women and children sexually abused over the years by the sailors, tourists and local pedophiles who will be traumatized for the rest of their lives.(...)

US Navy authorities cannot plead ignorance of the abuse. Their own naval investigative service discovered for themselves the child prostitution rings that flourished and entrapped the lives of the innocents without any direct action either by the Filipino government officials of Olongapo or the US Navy.

It still goes on. I walked the streets of Olongapo the night of the last big party and found a child being offered to sailors by a pimp outside Hot City. A cigarette vendor intervened to protect the pimp when I called a barangay policeman.

Now we know how the rings flourish. The police came and told the pimp to take the child home. Later they were back selling the child again. This child had been victimized by an American whose case is still pending in the Olongapo prosecutor's office after over a year. No action there either to save the children.

Now the victims are all forgotten. Left behind in the wake of the USS Independence as it steamed away for the last time. There are no accurate statistics of how many throwaway children live in the shacks and shanties of Olongapo slums. They must number in the thousands, those who have been rejected and disowned by their American fathers (...)

Many US Navy personnel have expressed their disgust at what is happening but they dare not speak out for fear of possible damage to their careers and their chances of promotion. There are those who care but there are many who don't and refuse to accept even the slightest degree of social or moral responsibility for any abuse, especially sexual abuse of children. One pathologically guilty US Navy captain in Subic told me defensively that child abuse by US sailors, if it did happen, was no worse than in other places in the Philippines. "It happens in every town and village" he said. But he also admitted that he had no evidence to back up his statement.

Such racist and irresponsible attitudes help us to focus on the impact of the US military presence in the Philippines for the past 50 years. It can only make us focus all the more on the cultural, social and moral damage that has been left behind by the US Navy and their "human waste" of broken lives and abandoned children."

Extract from "Philippine Daily Inquirer", March 29, 1992, Fr. Shay Cullen, Executive Director, Preda Human Development Center, Olongapo City, Philippines

North America

The Care and Treatment of Sexually Abused Children

Sister Mary Rose McGEADY[*]

Founded in 1972 in New York City, Covenant House International now has centers in nine American cities as well as in four other countries - Canada, Guatemala, Honduras and Mexico. An average of about 28,000 children per year are served by Covenant House in its various locations. Covenant House does extensive advocacy for street children with priority given to the protection of young people from sexual exploitation. Through amicus curiae briefs submitted to various courts - including the United States Supreme Court -legislative lobbying on state and federal levels, and extensive research and writing, the agency has contributed to an increase in the legal protection afforded to young people against sexual exploitation. Also, Covenant House works with local, national and international networks to provide more housing and other support to street children and their families.

It is estimated that between 1 and 1.3 million homeless youths live on the streets or in emergency shelters in the United States in the course of any given year. Covenant House has done extensive research on the psycho-social stressors experienced by clients in its youth shelter in New York City. About 72% of the youngsters reported an extremely disrupted household. Two-thirds said their parents were separated or divorced and two-thirds also said that a significant person had died. Approximately half said that they were afraid of being hit or that they had been beaten badly in the past. More than one-third stated that someone in the household had been an alcohol or drug abuser.

In this study, questions about sexual molestation were not asked in every interview, but of the 25 girls and 68 boys who were queried, 52% of the girls and 21% of the boys reported being sexually molested as young children. Almost three-quarters of the youngsters reported past or present symptoms of depression and more than a third said that they had been depressed all their lives. Many of these depressive symptoms correlated highly with sexual abuse. Being beaten, having a child or being sexually molested is highly associated with suicide attempts in the group of youngsters.

The majority of the clients in the research were severely deprived youngsters. Most were from poor, single-parent families living in sub-standard housing. Their lives were often characterized by physical and emotional as well as sexual abuse.

Most youngsters had never experienced the influence of a stable, caring adult. It is illustrative of the quality of their lives that several of the youngsters were abandoned by their families before the age of twelve and were forced to raise themselves, often living for long periods on the streets.

The care and treatment of such traumatized youngsters is a tremendous challenge to Covenant House and its staff. Often, it takes many days - sometimes weeks - before youngsters are willing to share the truth, the horror that has characterized their lives. It is, therefore, not immediately evident which children have been sexually abused. Eventually, however, nearly all of the youngsters will share this information and it is essential that careful attention be given to the care and treatment of these youngsters. In some cases, the trauma seems to have been so serious and the resulting pathology so great that these youngsters are referred to outside psychiatrists for intensive psycho-therapy. In other instances, a truly caring case manager or social worker can begin to help the youngster deal with the hard realities of sexual abuse in their lives. Initially, these youngsters tend to be distrustful and fearful of all adults. They are slow to relate, often need to test adults for sincerity, and are slow to share the depths of their psychological reactions to their bad experiences. In some instances the youngsters have had only one instance of sexual abuse in their lives. In other instances it has been a constant trauma, occurring over and over again, sometimes over a period of years. It is also important to note that oftentimes the abuser was a relative of the child - oftentimes a step-parent or older sibling, living in the same household. At other times the abuser has been a boyfriend or girlfriend of the single parent with whom the child lives. Therefore, to talk about the experience equates, in the mind of the youngster, with a betrayal of the abuser.

Increase in the number of cases of incest

Recent reports on the incidence of incest in the United States are very alarming, with some estimates being as high as that 38% of all children suffer from incest. At Covenant House, we make a strong effort to bring psychological services to address the problem as early and as comprehensively as possible.

It is also a fact that we need an extensive educational program to acquaint people with the deep psychological scars visited upon children by adults who abuse them. This would be one of our strongest recommendations for concerted action in the world at this time. ❏

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[*] President and Chief Executive Officer, Covenant House. For further information: 346 West 17 Street, New York, N.Y. 10011-5002, USA.

Asia

Informing Children of the Dangers of Child Prostitution

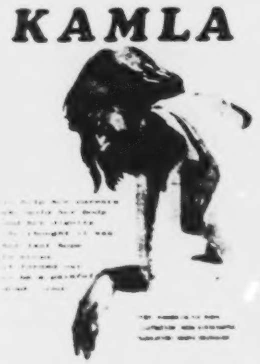
The Kamla Project

Siriporn SKROBANEK*

“I had not thought that bringing them along could benefit them so much.” This is an expression used by a woman teacher who had tribal girls in her company when she came down from a mountain village to attend a teachers' seminar. A few weeks later, an agent came into the village to persuade girls to go to work in Bangkok. A girl refused to go and told her father than she feared it would be like the video she had seen with her teacher at the seminar. The seminar she mentioned was one of the activities of the Kamla project which was initiated by the Foundation for Women in 1987.

Kamla and Kamkaew: Two books aiming at prevention

Kamla is the story of a northern village girl who had been deceived, forced into prostitution and finally met a tragic end. The book was born out of concern over the plight of Thai children who are lured and forced into prostitution. The story of Kamla is adapted from the real-life stories of northern girls who were rescued from brothels, continued with the real incident of a fire in Phuket (a seaside resort in the south of Thailand) in January 1984 when five girls were found burned to death in a locked room.



The book was designed by the Foundation for Women (FFW) as a reading book for the last grade of primary school. It aimed at informing the children about the danger of forced prostitution and at preventing them from being lured into such a tragic situation.

The book is divided into seven chapters so that pupils can easily read and understand the problem of child prostitution. In order to generate discussion and deepen children's understanding, at the end of each chapter, there are guidelines for further discussion. The book also includes vocabulary that children should know and a list of organizations where they can seek assistance. In close collaboration with the education office of nine provinces in the north, the book was distributed to 450 schools and several school clusters.

It was an eye-opening process for children, teachers and communities. For the first time the problem of child prostitution was raised and discussed in schools and in communities. To maintain the discussion and continue activities against child prostitution, FFW produced various kinds of educational media such as a newsletter, handbook, posters, slides, video cassette. Exposure trips to red-light areas and meetings with women in prostitution were also organized for teachers and community women/youth leaders.

According to teachers and community leaders, FFW was the first organization to have developed and disseminated information in various informal media materials to rural communities and to the general public. Similarly, information from teachers and local leaders participating in the Kamla project was publicized in the FFW newsletter and also in other mainstream media. In the second year a similar book entitled Kamkaew was produced for children in the northeast.

Impact of the project

After nearly four years (1987-1990) of implementation of the Kamla project, its achievements and failures can be shared as follows:

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* Secretary General of the Foundation for Women, FFW, 35/267 Charansanitwongse Rd. 62, Bangkok 10600, Thailand.

- **Discouraging the recruitment of children and young women in prostitution**. Though quantitative assessment cannot yet be carried out, letters from the target groups describing the changing situation in their villages reflect a growing awareness in rural communities of the plight of children in prostitution.
- **Highlighting the situation of child and juvenile prostitution**. It was observed by some local people that during the time of intensive campaigns and high media coverage on the prostitution problem, local police took an active role enforcing laws against brothel-keepers and recruiting agencies.
- **Encouraging local initiative and action in the prevention of child and juvenile prostitution**. After participating in the Kamla meetings, teachers and women leaders have initiated many programmes and activities to deal with the problem in their own communities.
- **Building up a network of people from different social sectors to combat child prostitution and trade in women**. Teachers, women and youth leaders were encouraged to work together and build up their own support system in disseminating information and initiating programmes for economic alternatives.
- **Seeking economic alternatives for children and young women**. Small project funds were set up to support economic activities initiated by the target groups to prevent children and youth from being lured into prostitution.

Besides achieving the above-mentioned project's objectives, Kamla has to a certain extent served to catalyse commitment and concern for preventing prostitution within the governmental and non-governmental sectors. The significant contribution of the Kamla project is a demonstration of how collaboration among governmental and non-governmental agencies can discourage the recruitment of children and young women in rural areas into prostitution.

The project has nonetheless encountered the following criticism from public and other agencies:

- The project is unable to provide a solution to the problem of child and juvenile prostitution.
- It is more tragic for children who have learned about the deplorable situation in prostitution from the stories of Kamla and Kamkaew and are yet unable to escape from prostitution. It would be much easier for a child to accept being prostituted without knowing the harsh realities of it.
- As the project does not provide sufficient economic support to poor families, it should not speak out against the parents' choice of sending their children into prostitution.
- The content of Kamla and Kamkaew are not appropriate for children of primary school age.

Children of shame

Pagsanjan Falls, in Pagsanjan, Laguna, is one of the favourite tourist destinations in the Philippines. The place, which can be reached in less than two hours by land, was developed as a tourist spot in the early years of Martial Law.

Despite its natural beauty, Pagsanjan folk are living in abject poverty. Unscrupulous tourists exploited the situation and started paying off young people, both male and female, to satisfy their carnal desires. Soon after, Pagsanjan became world-famous, not only because of its natural beauty, but... because of its prostitutes.

Against this backdrop evolved the story of "Children of Shame". Available both in soundslides (80) and video (BETA/VHS formats NTSC system), Children of Shame is a 15-minute production that looks into the poignant plight of male prostitutes, their feelings and aspirations, as well as their reflections on the work that they are doing. This production aims to inform the people that tourism, without proper planning and right objectives, could do more harm than good to the community.

For information : Asian Social Institute, 1518 Leon Guinto St, Malate, Metro-Manila, Philippines. Tel. (63-2)59 56 13 - Fax. (63-2) 522 10 95.

Political will required to end this form of exploitation

The Kamla project is a small attempt on the part of a private organization to exemplify the possibility of tackling the problem of child prostitution by using an educational method to raise community awareness. During the period of the project's implementation, it was felt strongly that the problem of child prostitution had developed beyond national boundaries, and political will and strong commitment from different agencies at different levels is required to end this form of child exploitation. ❑

Adapting Prevention Strategies to the Target Group

Mouvement du Nid

Françoise NICAISE*
Francine MEERT **

Prevention is one of the main concerns of the Belgian «Mouvement du Nid». It aims to inform all sectors of the population.

Going to the young people

On the one hand, there is what I would call targeted, specific prevention which takes place on the spot, where the young and adult prostitutes are operating.

Specialised teams operate on the streets in the context of the Mouvement du Nid's ICAR «Intervention Contact auprès des Adolescents de la Rue» project (a street outreach programme for adolescents), meeting young people working as prostitutes in the places they frequent: stations, parks, amusement arcades, cafes, clubs, discos, on the street, etc. During these meetings, our teams attempt to reply as effectively as possible to the questions put by these young people, who are mainly boys and whose average age is between 14 and 25. The subjects tackled are numerous and diverse: questions about prostitution and the educational and professional alternatives, questioning of their sexual identity, difficulties they are experiencing in relationships, fears, violence endured, the search for accommodation, release from prison, their rights and the defence of these, military service, ...

Our street outreach teams must undergo continuous training to be able to provide a rapid, correct response to each of these questions, but the main objectives regarding prevention are still:

- AIDS: information, detection, choice and use of condoms, medical check-ups;
- drug addiction: discussions and information on drugs and the risks involved, support during withdrawal from drugs, post-cure follow-up.

This type of prevention carried out by our teams in the red-light districts of Liège, Charleroi and Brussels is limited by our knowledge of the people involved, their daily life and living environment, and by our ability to provide concise, up-to-date information on the spot as well as useful addresses or the name of a person or resource institution working in conjunction with the movement. Its effectiveness can be measured by the quality of the contact and degree of confidence between one individual and another.

Information as prevention

And then there is the «other type of prevention» which is mainly aimed at those who have not yet been caught up in the labyrinth but who might be tempted by it: marginalised children, young people and adults.

In this context, and for about twelve years, we have been organising events in every branch of secondary (lower and higher) and further (university and non-university) education, in homes, in prisons, with various groups of adults from every background, with the legal authorities, the police, in seminars for teachers, special educators...

We start these events by referring to the audience involved and their preconceptions of the subject. We compare this knowledge (often «a priori») with two videos we have which are based on direct, present-day interviews with young people and adults who have worked as prostitutes. This is immediately followed by a debate where each person is free to speak, react and ask questions.

Even though we are perfectly aware that this informative and preventive activity is just a drop in the ocean, we think that it is vital to continue with it. Moreover, we must extend it and constantly examine the role that we are playing and the impact we are having, as well as the aim we are pursuing when we meet audiences whose ages, motivations, social status, experiences, etc., differ so much. ❑

Videos
Information - Prevention

◆ **"Throwaway Children" A documentary on information and prevention (Norwegian Ministry of Justice).**
Based on international interviews with people who experienced sexual abuse in their early childhood; parents whose children have been raped; young people who become prostitutes in order to survive; policemen trying to act against «clients» and paedophiles; fieldworkers and people operating in various areas who are regularly in contact with adults and/or young people facing these problems.

◆ **"Cristelle, Thierry, Nadia... and the others".** A documentary on prevention (Mouvement du Nid).
Based on interviews with three young adults (2 girls and 1 boy) who started working as prostitutes in Brussels when they were under age.

For further information: Mouvement du Nid, 14 rue Hydraulique, B - 1040 Brussels, Belgium - Tel. (32-2) 217 84 72.

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* In charge of the ICAR project.

** President of the «Mouvement du Nid».

Original in French

Latin America

Sexual Abuse of Children

Conclusions of a Survey

It would seem, on the basis of the experience of social workers, that a large number of girls in prostitution were previously victims of sexual abuse, particularly by members of their family. The survey on sexual abuse in Ecuador testifies to the seriousness of the problem. It is interesting to emphasize this in the framework of the present edition of Children Worldwide: to be warned is to be forearmed.

Sexual abuse is a social problem which usually meets with rejection and disbelief. The social costs of ignoring it are many: pregnancies among young girls, running away from home, suicides, prostitution, alcohol and drug abuse, psychiatric problems such as split personality and sexual dysfunctioning, sexual abuse of minors by persons who were themselves victims.

The study carried out in Ecuador is based on current theoretical ideas and presents results and conclusions on the variables observed in relation to the sexual abuse of children in Quito and Guayaquil. It deals in particular with the period of adolescence considered as the time when, because of language development and because there was already a certain distance from the situation being investigated, the survey could have maximum effect. This survey is different from others which generally concern predominantly adults. 70% of the adolescents had completed compulsory education and 30% had not.

The report also describes the methodological preparation and training of those who carried out the survey as well as the problems encountered in relation to the language of the micro-dynamic group surveyed.

The final report brings out the following often surprising elements:

◆ There is a higher level of sexual abuse of boys in Quito and Guayaquil than of girls. There was a higher incidence of sexual abuse among the uneducated population of Guayaquil than among that of Quito.

◆ Most perpetrators were men, but there was a high level of female perpetrators.

◆ Abusers of children in Quito and Guayaquil were usually young people aged between 19 and 25 years.

◆ Feelings caused by sexual abuse differed according to sex. The tendency to feel afraid and ashamed was greater among women than among men, although a considerable number of the latter also experienced these feelings. All, however, expressed a high level of guilt feelings. The feeling of anger was felt by a higher proportion of women. On the other hand, a feeling of pride caused by sexual abuse was experienced by a relatively low number, mainly men. Those who stated they also felt pleasure were mostly men.

The following aspects were similar to or reinforced existing theories:

◆ Families where there are victims of sexual abuse are more isolated in social terms.

◆ In most cases, the perpetrator was known to the child or was a friend of the family.

◆ The place where sexual abuse most often occurs is in the home of the child.

◆ Most children who have been sexually abused keep this secret during their childhood.

The report reveals important aspects that reflect cultural standards only found in Ecuador. It would be useful to see whether the conclusions from Ecuador are repeated in other Latin American situations, and to discuss the issue with researchers in Canada and the United States in order to enrich our knowledge and generate suitable responses. ❏

Programme of prevention in Brazil: health - theatre - SOS girls

The Brazilian Centre for Children and Adolescents - Casa de Passagem - (see p.14-15) strives **to inform** the low income girls of the cities of Recife and Olinda, openly clarifying questions such as sexuality, pregnancy, abortion, AIDS... It has set up a programme which seeks to prevent more and more girls from turning to the streets. It also tries to support their families, in particular the mothers, as well as the community groups that work with the young women

To facilitate and enrich this educational programme, the **Theatre Workshop** was formed and the programme is now successfully present on the streets and in various communities of the cities of Recife and Olinda. This, above all, encourages the participants to develop their capacity for communication and expression. In this way they can then transmit the teaching which they have received thanks to the various programmes.

Another fundamental service of support for the girls is the **SOS Girls** service. It was created especially for the defence of girls and adolescents. It has a special telephone service for emergency calls. A lawyer and a psychologist are also available.

Survey carried out in Quito and Guayaquil by William BIRD, Desiree CASTRO and Fernando SANCHEZ COBO. *Original in Spanish*

Who are the Clients?

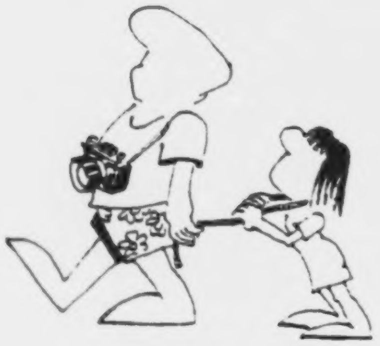
The paedophiles

For protection, paedophiles cluster together in their own exclusive organisations. Entering the world of paedophilia is like entering a medieval secret society. Paedophiles recognise each other by secret signs and have stringent rules governing entry into their brotherhood. They have their own covert operations to protect their members and try to gain support from police and leading members of the legal profession.

The first and most obvious function paedophile organisations perform is to provide a network of information which will enable paedophiles to survive and to evade the law. They also provide a number of supplementary services for their members (child pornography video loan service, exchange programme of photographs).

Paedophiles are often found to be respected members of society - persons who are trusted and even loved by the whole community. The profile of a typical paedophile reveals a middle-aged professional male. Possibly he is a doctor (often a paediatrician), teacher, social worker or clergyman. Usually he is involved in some community activity with children.

He is generally married, or has been married, and has children but his relationship with his wife is rarely satisfactory and the marriage will often collapse either before or after his paedophile tendencies are discovered. It is rare for the paedophile to have a sexual relatonship with his own children but his interest in other children is considerable and he can spend days, months or years in an obsessive attempt to lower the inhibitions and seduce a particular child. His usual approach is to use the child's natural curiosity about sex by asking questions, then he will slowly introduce the child to photographs or pornographic videos showing children in a sexual situation. Paedophiles in counselling have sometimes claimed that they enjoy the chase as much as the capture. It is not uncommon for paedophiles to have had sexual relations with dozens and even hundreds of children before they are caught. Most active paedophiles appear to prefer sexual relations with boys rather than girls but their preference does not equate with homosexuality.



The other sex tourists

While Western paedophile male tourists comprise the largest foreign threat to the children of Asian countries, the demand for child prostitutes does not come from them alone. At least four other groups of foreigners contribute to the demand for child prostitutes in Asia.

◆ **Women paedophiles**. The last few years have seen an increase in their numbers. (...) Most of them come from Western Europe and a large proportion appear to be widows or divorcees usually travelling in pairs. Social workers in Sri Lanka have reported that a number of women paedophiles from Germany and Switzerland have brought hormones with them for injecting into the testicles of their child sex partners (a boy of twelve years of age could not survive more than five or six such injections).

Preference for virgins. Virginity is highly prized in many cultures and there is always a demand for young girls. Among the superstitious poor there is a widely-held myth in Asia that sex with a virgin has the power to cure venereal disease. There is a lucractive trade in virgins in most of South-East Asia. Brothel keepers in Thailand, Taiwan and the Philippines will pay large sums of money for an attractive young girl who can be shown to be a virgin and there is an insatiable market of wealthy customers waiting. With modern technology, hymens can be restitched and plastic containers of blood inserted in a girl's vagina enabling her to be sold as a virgin several times over and still be able to furnish proof of her virginity.

◆ **Casual sex**. Travellers have often shown the tendency to do in Bangkok or Manila things they would not even contemplate in their home town. Men, and sometimes women, who have never remotely contemplated a sexual relationship with a young child can be drawn into such a situation. And it is not just the lone or casual travellers who succumb to sexual experimentation with a child; couples bored with life do too.

◆ **Pornography**. With the ease of modern duplication methods, paedophiles have found they can reproduce videos and sell them for considerable sums of money. The commercial production of child pornography and its distribution takes place without legal interference in the United States, Denmark, Sweden and the Netherlands.

"The Child and the Tourist", Ron O'Grady, ECPAT, Bangkok, 1992. Extracts.

An International Campaign Against Sex Tourism

Ron O'GRADY

In 1990, research in four Asian countries showed a dramatic increase in the number of children sexually exploited in those countries. The situation was such that there was only one answer : trafficking in Asian children for sexual purposes must end. ECPAT, an international campaign, was launched. Ron O'Grady, the International Coordinator of ECPAT, tells of the evolution of ECPAT and the need to develop an international network of support and information, as the basis for action and advocacy on the sexual abuse of Asian children.

When faced with a young girl who has been sold into prostitution the traditional Christian response will be to try and rescue the girl to give her a better life. This is understandable and commendable. But when that same child has been kept in a brothel prison for months and forced to serve up to 30 customers a night what does rescue mean?

Social workers helping such children have reported their frustration at trying to assist them. The child's young body has been so consistently abused that attempts at rehabilitation are often close to impossible. The child has a short span of attention, cannot concentrate, vacillates between anger, guilt and withdrawal and has no self-esteem or dignity.

In 1990, the results of research in four Asian countries (Sri Lanka, the Philippines, Thailand and Taiwan) showed that there has been a dramatic increase in the number of prostituted children in these countries in recent years. The Christian groups who initiated this study at first looked for ways to help rehabilitate the children but very quickly moved to the point where they decided that the only possible solution was to find a way to stop the prostitution of children altogether. The situation had reached the point where pastoral solutions alone were not sufficient. There was only one way - the trafficking in Asian children for sexual purposes must be ended.

From this meeting in Chiang Mai, May 1990, was born the international campaign which aims to End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism (ECPAT). By January 1991, it had sufficient support to establish an international office in Thailand as well as small national coordinating offices in Manila, Taipei, Colombo and Bangkok.

The first success of the programme was that almost all the agencies working with children in these four countries agreed to join the campaign and support the programme in their country. When one is aware of the unfortunate rivalries which often mark the work of voluntary agencies, this agreement to cooperate was a significant step in its own right. It also highlights the importance of the issue for the agencies concerned and gives some small hope for success.

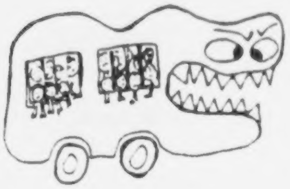
Many people knew that the prostitution of children was a serious social problem in some Asian countries but few realised the extent to which it is the result of systematic and organised criminal activity. Now, as each new case of child prostitution is unveiled, it reveals a little more the extent to which people are profiteering from the trafficking in children.

"Orphanages" as a front

While there is an active demand for children as sexual partners among some Asian nationals, much of the growth of the trade is caused by foreign tourists actively seeking children in Asian countries and willing to pay large sums to people who will give them security to indulge their particular sexual obsession.

We have discovered the presence of a large international network of paedophiles who are visiting and often living permanently in South-East Asia. To maintain their life style some have opened what they describe as "orphanages" or "street shelters" for poor children. These apparently compassionate deeds are actually fronts for paedophile organisations who use them as centres to provide young children to visiting paedophiles.

In 1990, police in Thailand arrested American Mormon Mark Morgan, the founder of the Bangkok Children's Shelter. This well-known charity was supported by many individuals and agencies who never knew it was actually a place for American paedophiles from the North American Men-Boys Love Association, a paedophile group, to obtain their young victims when they visited Bangkok. Several other "homes" of this kind have been uncovered in Thailand and the Philippines.



Later we found that paedophile organisations in Europe, North America and Australia are actively encouraging their members to abuse children in Asia rather than at home because the penalties for discovery are less severe. At least twenty such organisations have been identified and most provide travel services for their members including the addresses of safe houses, helpful lawyers and contract persons in many cities.

Introducing ECPAT

A Conference held in Chiang Mai, Thailand, May 1-5, 1990, agreed to launch an international campaign to end child prostitution. They set up a working committee which invited five agencies to sponsor the programm

The Ecumenical Coalition on Third World Tourism sponsors of the Chiang Mai Conference

The Christian Conference of Asia representing the Protestant Churches of the region

The Office for Human development (of FABC) representing Asian Catholics

The Ecumenical Network on Third World Tourism (TEN) based in Europe

The North American Network on Tourism (NANET) based in USA

These five agencies established support networks in four Asian countries

Philippines ECPAT-Philippines

Sri Lanka PEACE

Taiwan ECPAT-Taiwan

Thailand TECST

Representatives of the above nine bodies comprise the Executive of ECPAT

The Executive invites two Permanent Consultants to all its meetings
UNICEF (Children in Exceptionally Difficult Circumstances)
ICCB The International Catholic Child Bureau

ECPAT-International has a staff of two persons. An executive secretary and an international coordinator. The international headquarters of ECPAT is in Bangkok, Thailand. The program is for 3 years: 1991-3

Ten ECPAT support groups were begun in 1991

ECPAT is financed on a modest budget of US$180,000 per year. This covers the cost of staff and administration for six offices as well as programs and publishing

Funding comes from a wide range of organisations and individuals in: Germany, Netherlands, Sweden, United Kingdom, Switzerland, United States, Canada, Japan, Australia and New Zealand and from individual supporters in Asia

Australia appointed a part-time secretary funded by World Christian Action

Canada. The Canada-Asia Working Group acts on ECPAT issues.

France began the Campagne Francaise contre le Tourisme Sexuel

Japan founded "Stop! - the Child Prostitution Group."

Germany has a task-force to end child prostitution and employs fulltime staff

Netherlands. Children at Risk and CARITAS promote ECPAT.

Sweden. Both Church of Sweden Mission and Radda Barnen support ECPAT activities

Switzerland. Schweizer Kampagne gegen Kinder-prostitution.

United Kingdom. The Ecumenical Coalition against Child Exploitation (ECCE)

United States. The US Committee to support ECPAT.

Apart from male paedophiles the demand for young children comes from casual tourists interested in the novelty of sex with a child and from a small but growing number of female paedophiles. The demand is also encouraged by the growth of pornography. The introduction of the video camera has given a new encouragement to paedophilia. In former years you could take photos of obscene actions but ran the risk of being discovered when the film was developed. Today the video film needs no processing and the pornographer can act in total privacy.

Searching for solutions

Today, nobody can doubt the extent of the problem, the question for ECPAT is how to effectively combat this crime against humanity.

The first clear message we have is that this issue can only be faced on a global level. If the supply of children is coming from Asian countries, the demand is coming from the west. ECPAT has spent as much time establishing support groups and offices in Europe, America, Australia and Japan as it has in the countries supplying the children. This is a new kind of

"The Child and the Tourist"

The story behind the escalation of child prostitution in Asia, Ron O'Grady, ECPAT

More than one million children
become prostitutes every year.
Most are in Asia. This is a
crime against humanity

The prostitution of children is running rampant in Asia. Tens of thousands of young children are being kept as sexual slaves to satisfy adult passion.
The International Coordinator of the Bangkok-based Campaign to End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism, Ron O'Grady, tells how such a situation came about and what can be done to stop it.

partnership but we are already beginning to see its potential, especially for arousing public opinion.

Through globalisation, criminal paedophile activity in any Asian country can be relayed to the country of the paedophile so that the media will be instantly aware of the incident. In this way it is hoped to build up a sense of moral outrage which will eventually ensure that abusers cannot act with as much ease as they do at present. Several major television programmes have recently produced documentaries on the actions of paedophiles in Asia and the ease with which children can be purchased. An American programme in 1990 had so much prominence in Thailand that it almost caused an international incident but in the process it forced local people to debate the issue with great vigour.

Within the countries of Asia the public prominence now being given to the prostitution of children is beginning to lead to some political action. In Sri Lanka, the protest of the Catholic church in Negombo against the soliciting of beach boys and the public activity of paedophiles received such publicity that the politicians paid attention and the police were forced to take action.

Legislation in both Thailand and the Philippines is being considered which will make it much more difficult for foreigners to purchase the sexual services of children. There are several loopholes in the law and ECPAT has convened meetings of lawyers to examine ways in which the law can be changed so that children's rights will be protected.

In Taiwan, which is not a member nation of the United Nations, the local ECPAT group made a quite dramatic breakthrough when they persuaded the national parliament to accept the need to ratify the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The legislation to begin this process was passed unanimously on May 1st, 1992.

In March 1992, ECPAT convened an international conference on "Children in Prostitution" at Sukhothai Open University in Bangkok, Thailand. This meeting brought together 170 persons from 26 countries. Representing a wide range of professional and technical competence the group struggled with the single question of how to end child prostitution. Many strategies were considered and will be implemented in the next few months. Central to them all was the need to develop an international network of support and information that will enable swift action and a united voice on matters affecting the sexual abuse of Asian children.

The Conference made a call for specific commitment and action from many groups including government leaders, law enforcers, religious leaders, the media and the tourism industry. The conference statement ended with the affirmation that "children are vulnerable. They need the protection of the law, the concern of government, the affirmation of their rights and our special care." It is a commitment we could all echo. ❑

For information: ECPAT, PO Box 178, Klong-chan, Bangkok 10240, Thailand. Tel/Fax: (66 2) 519 2794.

Some ECPAT Initiatives

ECPAT/France

The «Association Contre la Prostitution Enfantine» (ACPE -association to combat child prostitution) took the initiative of launching a campaign against sex tourism with the help of the ICCB - France, the International Abolitionist Federation - France and the Federation "La Voix de l'Enfant". The French ECPAT campaign intends to:

- ◆ sensitize the media;
- ◆ approach travel organizations, etc., to ask them to apply the Tourism Bill of Rights and the Tourist Code adopted by the UN, particularly the articles relating to the problem of prostitution;
- ◆ act in order to have French laws adapted and brought into line with those of certain Asian countries so that legal action is taken against paedophile customers;
- ◆ provide moral and financial support to two projects: one concerning preventive work in Thailand, and the other one concerning the opening of a hostel in the Philippines for child prostitutes aged between 8 and 14 years.

ECPAT-France-BICE, 40 rue La Fontaine, F - 75016 Paris, France - Tel. (33-1) 42 88 73 58 - Fax (33-1) 45 27 84 39.

ECPAT/USA

The ECPAT/USA was launched in 1991 by a group of Catholic and Protestant NGO, with the aim of drastically reducing US participation in sex tours to Asia. The two year plan of action includes the following objectives:

- ◆ to create moral outrage by raising public opinion about the participation of US men in sex tourism including the US military;
- ◆ to foster the political will to develop and enforce laws designed to protect the human rights of all children in conjunction with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- ◆ to fundraise for the international ECPAT campaign and some specific projects in Asia. ICCB in New York has been an active participant in the formation of this campaign.

ECPAT/USA: Nat. Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, 575 Riverside Drive, Rm 620, New York, NY 10115, USA - Tel. (1-212) 870 2372 - Fax (1-212) 870 2055.

ECPAT : A Unique Partnership

Maureen SENEVIRATNE [*]

What is unique about the ECPAT (End Child Prostitution in Asian Tourism) Campaign is that it is the first time that North/South countries have joined together to seek to end the escalating tragedy of the sexual exploitation of small children on the beaches and in the holiday resorts of Asian destinations and thereby focus the attention of others, not only those in tourism, on the crimes being committed against children, the violence they are subjected to physically and mentally, emotionally and psychologically, and the sexual abuse of children in both the North and South.

In both North and South, the ECPAT Campaign consists of primarily raising awareness among people to the heinous nature of the problem. This is followed by educative programmes in the Asian countries whereby social workers, workers in community development, parents, teachers, lawyers, medical personnel, religious bodies, schools, etc., are informed and advised by means of seminars/workshops/meetings, etc., as to what steps could be taken to prevent the occurrence of sexual exploitation of children. Task forces and alert-groups have to be and are being established in the affected areas. AIDS education programmes have also been started. Public rallies and demonstrations against sex tourism have lent a filip to the work, especially in Europe. Most important, study and research groups in the North have begun to look deep into their own societies where child abuse is so rampant and from where most paedophiles originate to discover causes and reasons.

Sri Lanka: Church launches an awareness compaign

The Catholic clergy of the Negombo district has launched a campaign to create an awareness among parents about the evils that threaten the children of the area.

"Now tourism is being perverted by making it solely a money-making industry. By peddling drugs, prostitution and perversion of children some unscrupulous people have got used to profiting from tourism. We cannot any longer watch in silence the erosion of our moral and spiritual values and the ruination of our children. We have to rise against these dangers threatening our society (...)," declared Bishop Malcom Ranjith, Auxiliary Bishop of Colombo. "Without internal change external development alone will not stand the test of time."

The Bishop also recalled that Sri Lanka is a signatory to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. "If the existing laws are insufficient, the state must introduce new legislation to protect our children. Let us not permit the perversion of our children who will have to be the leaders tomorrow. Sexual abuse of innocent chidren is a very base and despicable thing. Parents must rise up aginst these evil tendencies. Do not be intimidated by any power that will try to stop this campaign", he appealed. We cannot any longer watch in silence the ruination of our children.

> **" We cannot any longer watch in silence the ruination of our children. "**

Every country in the ECPAT network has organised its own methodology to suit conditions and circumstances in their particular societies, but by and large the broad outline and structure defined by the Directorate of the campaign based in Bangkok has been followed. In Sri Lanka, for example, awareness-raising was given priority from the start and networking among government agencies and non-governmental organisations was essential. Street and beach children's programmes were also begun to give informal education and find alternate employment for older children. In Switzerland a nation-wide campaign which lasted for over six months resulted in an intensive focus on the problem of the sexual exploitation of children both in the country and in Asian holiday destinations.

Newsletters from ECPAT's international office in Bangkok and from other ECPAT associates and the countries under review have appeared and been forwarded to the networks. The media has been alerted and has generously lent its support in both the sending and receiving countries. In Sri Lanka the organisation PEACE[**] (Protecting Environment and Children Everywhere) succeeded in motivating socio-religious groups to involve law enforcing elements and governmental groups to establish a task force to monitor the beach areas and take preventive measures. ❑

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[*] Journalist, Sri Lanka.

[**] PEACE, P.O. Box 58, Mount Lavinia, Sri Lanka.

United Nations Recommendations on Child Prostitution

Mr. Vitit Muntarbhorn, United Nations Special Rapporteur on the sale of children, submitted his second report (see page 4) to the United Nations Nations Commission on Human Rights. The report covers the period January 1991 to December 1991 and aims to provide a more detailed analysis of the problem worldwide. In the general recommendations, the author underlines that the report is not intended to be exhaustive, and it should be considered as a starting point for sustained efforts on the part of the international community to investigate the issue of the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography. He suggests that updated information should be collected consistently by all countries, and this should be made available to the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and relevant agencies and personnel for collation and analysis; national units must be designated and/or established, just as networking between governmental and non-governmental institutions and personnel should be encouraged. In the recommendations concerning child prostitution, presented in their entirety below, V. Muntarbhorn underlines that strategies to tackle the issue should be both preventive and curative, interlinking with relevant catalysts at all levels.

◆ An **integrated and multidisciplinary approach** is needed to tackle the prostitution problem. (§314)

◆ **Assistance** is required **for both families and children** so as to lift them out of the poverty that drives children into prostitution or that pushes parents to sell their children. (§315)

◆ The **responsibility of customers** should be advocated. On the one hand, this implies criminalizing customer behaviour. On the other hand, it means using incentives for changed behaviour through more education and consciousness raising, as well as peer-group pressure to promote children's rights. (§316)

◆ **Migrant child prostitutes** should be protected from harm, whether or not they enter the country illegally. Help should be given to them to change their lifestyle and their basic human rights should be guaranteed if they are sent back to their country of origin. This should be placed in the context of relevant international standards concerning the rights of migrant workers. (§317)

◆ No discrimination or inhumane measures should arise against **child prostitutes who are found to be HIV positive**. Their rights should be respected and protected. Facilities such as hospices and shelters should be provided. (§318)

◆ More attention should be paid to the **transnational traffic in children** which takes place between various parts of the world. Appropriate action should be taken to apprehend the culprits and return children safely to their home. (§319)

◆ **Sex tourism** should be discouraged and the service sector, including tourist agencies, should act more responsibly on this issue in their dealings with their customers. A dialogue should be initiated between international and national tourist organizations to adopt a policy on children's rights and protection from exploitation. (§320)

◆ Incentives should be given to **non-governmental initiatives**, including tax exemptions, in relation to programmes which help child prostitutes. (§321)

◆ Exchange of **paedophile lists** between different countries should help to prevent the repetition of offences by the same persons, and should be encouraged. (§322)

◆ **Traditions** which perpetuate child prostitution should be changed, not only through legislative enactments, but also through a broader educational base and through raising consciousness, in keeping with international norms. (§323)

◆ The issue of child prostitution should be discussed more openly at all levels of the **educational system**. (§324)

ICCB : Coalition-Building
to Fight the Sexual Exploitation of Children

One of ICCB's first actions was to launch an international study on child pornography - a study which clearly called for the criminalisation not only of the production and distribution of child pornography but also the possession of it. Today, five years after that study was done and with only 1 European country which penalises possession, ICCB is pleased to note that the Council of Europe is making a strong recommendation in this direction to its member countries (see p.40).

To find out what was being done around the world ICCB began to document the innovative projects around the world working in curative or preventive care for child victims of sexual exploitation. The publication came out in 1991 in English and in 1992 in French; Spanish and Chinese versions are currently being prepared.

At the same time, the ICCB regional offices in Latin America and Africa were alerted to the problem and were called upon to take action. In Latin America, a technical seminar in Buenos Aires took place in 1991 with NGOs, church personnel and UNICEF.

Latin America: De-institutionalisation

The Buenos Aires seminar highlighted the tendency in programming in Latin America which has largely been dependent on an institutionalised approach. This has meant in many cases that children were deprived of their liberty. However in the last 20 years various new approaches have been tried and tested. Some of the more successful programmes in Latin America identify or create alternative work schemes and encourage the child to be a leading player in his/her rehabilitation.

The major recommendation was that ICCB should try to bring together the few innovative projects working with these children in order to promote exchanges and learning processes.

Africa: Alternatives - not repression

At the same time in West Africa, ICCB had been invited to co-sponsor a regional seminar on the same subject. The ICCB working group on the issue in Abidjan had already pointed to gross exploitation of children in child pornography and had succeeded in closing down one porno cinema. Again the approach was realistic - no immediate break with the life but a progressive accompaniment by providing educational, economic and social alternatives to enable them to leave prostitution. The seminar called upon governments not to take a repressive stance with child victims of prostitution but rather to foster preventive and curative actions. The repressive stance is for the clients and organisers. Combatting the school drop-out rates was another major target as well as anti-discrimination measures in favour of women and girls.

From words to action

Four objectives have been set in Latin America:

- evaluation of pilot projects currently being tested including why some succeed and others do not
- training courses are planned with professionals who work with children - police, health, legal profession, etc.
- a meeting for members of the various religious congregations who work with children at risk is planned for 1993 to tap their tremendous experience in the field and also to help improve programming.
- improve coalition-building by supporting other NGOs in developing regional seminars

In Africa, the ICCB regional office has chosen the field of prevention to develop actions in this field. Given that child domestic workers are often vulnerable to abuse and their status may lead them to prostitution, training courses for domestic workers are planned all over Abidjan to increase their knowledge and improve their status in general. To carry out this activity, ICCB has negotiated the transfer of 4 SVP sisters to Abidjan to help implement the work with the children. In so doing, ICCB hopes to increase resistance to prostitution in the future. ⌟

1986	ICCB suggests the inclusion of Art.39 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child giving children a right to rehabilitation.
1988	International survey on child pornography.
1988-92	Lobbying of UN human rights bodies.
1991	Publication of "The Sexual Exploitation of Children - Field Responses". ICCB designated as coordinator of the NGO sub-group on sexual exploitation of children at the United Nations. ICCB invited to serve as consultant to ECPAT International.
1991-92	ICCB helps to set up ECPAT in France, USA .
1991	Regional seminars in West Africa and Latin America.
1992	ICCB initiates: - a regional programme of coordination in Latin America - a pilot preventive project for child domestic workers in Abidjan - a planning meeting in S.E. Asia - special issue of Children Worldwide and two small publications in the **ICCB Series.** - ICCB invited to address the first Vatican conference on the theme organised by the Pontifical Council for the Family.

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The Mass Media and Sexual Exploitation

Jean FERNAND-LAURENT*

In a culture that is more and more mediatised, we are within our rights to question the reponsibility the media have in the ever-increasing sexual violence against young children. Images are not neutral. If they did not have any effect, would they be used so much in advertising? In order to protect children, measures at different levels are indispensable.

In reflecting on the relationship between culture, sex and money, we cannot avoid mentioning a new form of North American and European culture which is now universally disseminated. It has become tacked onto our traditional cultures, and is conveyed by mass communication methods, in other words the media. This media culture develops, reproduces and disseminates mainly images, but not just any images.

We are born and grow up surrounded by images: those of our families, our homes, our neighbours and nature. These are healthy, useful images. But, if we live in a fairly industrialised society, we are soon faced with other, very different images: images of consumer goods, violence, and women and love presented from a very particular point of view. Yes indeed, industrialised societies really deserve the title «consumer societies» which was conferred on them some twenty-five years ago. Unfortunately, they usually succeed in having all other societies imitate them just as a drunkard entices other people to drink. Even if individually we do not have the means to buy the goods on offer, we are still consuming - images. Consumer societies are to a large extent spectator societies.

The effect of images of violence

In spite of the use of media in schools the media have in general a negative effect on young people. The gift which Europe believed it was presenting to Africa when it exported its image broadcasting technology was a poisoned gift.

Images are not neutral: they are not indifferent. They always leave some trace in the user's consciousness or subconsciousness. If images did not have any effect, would they be used so much in advertising?

The effect of images of violence has often been - and is still -debated. Many people suspect such images of encouraging delinquency involving attacks on people and property. Human sciences have joined the debate. We know just how inaccurate and subject to passing trends these sciences can be. For instance, from 1955 on, it became fashionable to say that images of violence enabled us to release our aggression harmlessly. This theory endowed with a prestigious-sounding Greek name, «catharsis», has been abandoned by its American author, Seymour Feshbach, since 1967. Nevertheless it still lingers on almost everywhere, particularly in the circles whose pockets have been enriched by such images. This theory must be categorically rejected as all facts point to the great harm caused by real or fictitious images of violence on our screens.

Much less attention is focused on the effects of pornographic images. All serious research, notably that carried out officially in Canada and the United States, reveals that pornographic images are one of the main factors in perverse deviant behaviour and sexual delinquency, in other words incest and rape.

Former United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others. *Orignal in French*

To clarify matters, let us define «pornography» using the definition produced by the UNESCO experts' meeting (Madrid, 1986): the provocative presentation, for lucrative purposes, of sexuality separated from love. This is morally condemned by the UN and UNESCO and forbidden by some national laws, which penalise the exhibition of pornographic images to minors and possession, even in private, of pornographic material using child actors.

As well as such abominable images which in principle appear on our television screens only after midnight, there is a vast category of images which, at first sight, may appear to be much less serious but which still require vigilance: advertising images using the bodies, as naked as possible, of women or, more recently, children to sell all kinds of products. There is a danger that, as one becomes accustomed to seeing the body of a woman used for selling items, one imperceptibly adopts the idea that her body itself is for sale. This is a slippery slope which may lead to the exploitation of prostitution.

Definition

The term "child pornography" refers to the visual or audio depiction of a child for the sexual gratification of the user, and involves the production, distribution and/or use of such material.

Vitit Muntarbhorn, United Nations Commission on Human Rights, 48 th session, 1992.

Protect the children

We are surrounded by the media, hassled by them in the street, in public places and even in the intimacy of our own homes. The question is, therefore, what is the best way of using the media?

Let us take a basic principle. In the first article of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the word «dignity» comes before «rights». This means that human dignity is the foundation and justification for all the rights defined later on in the Declaration. It follows that none of the freedoms listed in the Declaration or in the two covenants which followed it should, when exercised, undermine the dignity of men, women or children.

This applies to freedom of expression, in particular. Article 19 of the 1966 Covenant on Civil and Political Rights states explicitly that the exercise of this right comprises special duties and special responsibilities. Therefore one should not invoke freedom of expression when arguing in favour of pornographers and producers or distributors of images which degrade women and shock children. It was not designed for this. On the contrary, media professionals, especially advertising and television professionals, are required to adopt a code of ethics, or at least a code of practice, which takes account of all aspects of the fundamental principle of respect for human dignity and which safeguards in particular the dignity of women and the innocence of children.

Article 17 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly on 20 November 1989, obliges ratifying States to encourage «the development of appropriate guidelines for the protection of the child from information and material injurious to his or her well-being». This covers images of violence as well as many other images, notably those which lie about women and love.

But all the ethical or deontological codes, all the guidelines and all the codes of conduct in the world will not suffice to protect women and children. What we must do is to develop parallel forms of education in the use of the media within the framework of schools and families. Such forms of education would teach children to be selective about television programmes and to adopt a critical stance vis-à-vis the images and slogans on television and in advertising. This media education[*] should form an integral part of civic education and consumer education. It implies that parents and teachers have themselves acquired this capacity to be selective and critical. What are our family associations thinking and doing about this? What are our Ministers of Education thinking and doing?

Porn videos blamed for child abuse

Parents who let their children see pornographic videos or "adult" magazines are partly to blame for the development of child sex abuse, the National Children's Home childcare charity said.

Following an enquiry, it revealed that as many as one in three child abusers are themselves children under the age of 18, who often go on to become child molesters as adults. Mr. Tom White, Chief Executive of the charity, said: "I hope this inquiry will mean that the cries for help from children who are abused by brothers or sisters, baby-sitters or fellow pupils are heard and acted upon and that young abusers are recognized and helped."

Mrs. Valerie Howarth, Director of Child Line and co-author of the report, said there had been instances of young children seeing extremely pornographic material and then trying to repeat what they had seen. "Parents should be very careful about what their children see," she added.

The report distinguishes between young children who examine one another's bodies as part of growing up, inappropriate behaviour such as excessive interest in genitalia and abusive behaviour in which force is used.

It recommends that all sexually abusive behaviour should be brought to the attention of social services or the police.

The Daily Telegraph, London, 24 April 1992.

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[*] Television and Video in the Family. A Guide for Parents and Educators, ICCB, Geneva. To be published in May 1993.

Paedophile tourists in the Third World

Possibilities for Legal Actions in the West

Pierre TOFFEL*

In addition to what is being done to protect child victims of prostitution in the countries concerned, action in the countries from which the "paedophile tourists" come is also necessary. This means here in the West. Although it is true that paedophile offenders come from other parts of the world, such as Japan or the Gulf States, Mr. Toffel confines himself here to European countries since they have the legal systems in which possibilities for action are currently the most realistic.

Penal measures exist in most western countries

With regard to child prostitution it is, of course, essential to undertake large-scale information and sensitization campaigns here in the West. But it is possible to do more, particularly at a legal level.

Most western countries have penal measures which provide for prosecution in their own country of those who have committed criminal acts whilst abroad. In principle, for such convictions to be possible, the crime must be punishable in the two countries concerned (this is the principle of double incrimination).

This is the case with regard to sexual acts committed with minors. In fact, countries like Thailand or the Philippines have such provisions, which of course the western countries also have.

As an example, we will briefly analyse the case of a Swiss citizen who committed sexual abuse against a child in Thailand.

Since such an offence is punishable in both countries, there is nothing to prevent this man from being judged in Switzerland for the act committed in Thailand, since Article 6 of the Swiss penal code permits the perpetrator of such a crime to be tried in Switzerland.

Once this stage has been reached, the main problem is that of providing proof. The fact that the crime actually happened has, by all possible means, to be proved. This can be done through various channels and in various ways. For example the police of the country in which the act was committed could transfer his dossier to the authorities in the county of origin, either through diplomatic channels or via organisations such as the CIDE. It would also be possible for witnesses to come to testify or provide duly legalised depositions.

This is the framework within which CIDE contacts the authorities of various countries to set up a network of relations facilitating such legal acltion.

It would also be desirable for the child victim of sexual abuse to be named as the plaintiff and thus obtain damages which then be used for his/her rehabilitation. CIDE proposes to provide lawyers who would defend the interests of the child concerned.

To return to procedural problems, it should be noted that, according to present Swiss law only a Swiss citizen can stand trial in Switzerland for a crime committed abroad. For example, a Frenchmen

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Swiss lawyer. Member of the CIDE Committee. *Original in French* residing in Switzerland can not be tried by the Swiss authorities for such a crime.

This situation - which is to some extent a result of the refusal of some countries to extradite their own nationals - should be improved so that foreigners on Swiss territory may also be tried in Switzerland for such offences.

Reinforce the deterrent effect

A first improvement has recently been made by the introduction of Article 6bis into the penal code. But this article only permits the trial in Switzerland of those foreigners who have committed punishable offences abroad and with whose country of origin Switzerland had signed an international treaty.

Since the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child does not contain penal measures and since no other international treaty exists to punish sexual acts committed with children, Article 6 bis cannot be cited. There will certainly be a need for parliamentary invention aiming at widening the field of application of Article 6 or 6 bis.

In conclusion, it should be noted that such legal actions carried out here in the West would have the double merit of not only sanctioning the perpetrators of such acts but above all of making pedophile tourists understand that, even committed in the Third World, their acts can be punished in their country of origin.

In conjunction with major information campaigns these legal measures would thus have an evident deterrant effect.

What do the

Laws which could be used to apprehend exploiters of child prostitution are to be found in virtually all systems.

◆ Examples in **North America** include the various state laws in the United States and the Canadian Criminal Code.

◆ In **Europe**, the Criminal or Penal Code provides protection to children in virtually all countries including Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Netherlands, Norway, Spain and Sweden, although the age of consent varies by country. There is also specific legislation on children and young persons which defines the powers of the police in such matters, e.g., in the United Kingdom. (§153)

◆ In **Asia**, the pattern of legislation is similar. Provisions in the Criminal or Penal Code exist in such countries as Bangladesh, Japan, Philippines and Thailand. Specific legislation on children and sexual exploitation can be found in such countries as India, Sri Lanka and Thailand. Some traditional practices which could lead to children being used in child prostitution, such as the Devadasi custom of deifying young girls (who ultimately fall into prostitu-

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The C.I.D.E.

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE DIGNITY OF CHILDREN

The mission of the CIDE "Comité International pour la Dignité de l'Enfant" (International Committee for the Dignity of Children) is to lobby governments, authorities and public opinion, so as to ensure that the elementary rights as set down in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child are respected. It does this through on the spot investigations and legal action. CIDE has 100 members and its executive committee is composed of journalists and of legal experts.

Some recent actions

◆ CIDE investigated then denounced a travel agency in Zurich which provided information to paedophiles travelling to Asia on the procedure to follow in order to find young victims. A complaint for procurement and incitement to prostitution was lodged against that agency. As a consequence the agency was excluded from the Swiss Federation of Travel Agencies and had to close down shortly afterwards.

◆ The existence of child prostitution networks through the Minitel (telephone information system with direct access from the home) in France, has also attracted the attention of CIDE. A reliable source of information discovered that some parents are offering the services of their own children for "parties" in this way. CIDE has passed on these files to a French journalist who is continuing the research.

◆ The traffic in organs removed from children in a country of Latin America has provoked investigation by CIDE. The existence of such traffic was denounced by the local press, but the authorities are only slowly starting to investigate. Exposure at international level of this case could accelerate the breaking up of this vile practice.

◆ A journalist, mandated by CIDE, recently carried out an investigation on the future of children who are HIV positive or who suffer from AIDS in Southeast Asia. His detailed report which was submitted to the Thai authorities resulted in the freeing of 153 young Burmese girls, most of whom were under the age of 16, on 7 July during a raid by Thai police of the Crime Prevention Division. Some of the victims had been captured by traffickers and hidden in brothels. Beaten and malnourished they were held captive behind barbed wire. This operation was the largest ever organized in the country. A programme of rehabilitation for the young girls was set up with the collaboration of the Thai authorites, the CIDE and other NGOs.

CIDE, 24 av. de Florimont, CH - 1006 Lausanne, Switzerland. Tel. (41-21) 311 51 51; Fax (41-21) 311 51 52.

laws say ?

tion), have also been banned by law, e.g., the India Devadasi Prohibition of Dedication Act. However, the custom persists in practice. (§154)

◆ In **Central/South America**, there are parallel criminal laws or spoecific child-related laws which can be used to protect children from sexual exploitation. Innovations include the new Statute of the Child and Adolescent 1991 in Brazil which provides more decentralized measures against child exploitation. (§155)

◆ In **Africa**, the juridical situation is similar with either a criminal code or specific child/youth law learing on child prostitution in all countries. (§156)

(...) Countries are now beginning to exchange lists of paedophiles deported for misconduct so as to prevent them from entering neighbouring countries. However, travel agencies and tourist organizations are reticent to adopt a policy on prostitution, particularly child prostitution. Ironically, it is the advent of AIDS which is reducing sex tourism in certain quarters.

Vitit Muntarbhorn, United Nations Commission on Human Rights, 48th session, 1992.

Interpol

Offences Committed Against Children and Young Persons

Sabine MANKE*

In 1989, the year of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, ICPO-Interpol made a resolution to improve international police cooperation on offences against children. The General Assembly asked the General Secretariat, in collaboration with the United Nations, to conduct a study on this subject. For the first time, Interpol turned its attention towards the crime victim: it was therefore considered important to ensure that all relevant expertise be incorporated into the study. Subsequently, police experts from various disciplines and different countries met at Interpol General Secretariat in Lyon (France) at the 1st International Symposium on Offences Committed Aganst Children and Young Persons (7th-9th April 1992) and discussed the replies to a questionnaire which had been sent out previously to all Interpol member countries. The experts agreed upon a set of conclusions.

Some general considerations of universal significance have been placed at the beginning of the conclusions. The first general consideration clearly refers to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and requires the best interest of the child to be of paramount concern for the police. In the following general considerations it was emphasized firstly, that law enforcement agencies combatting offences against children should pay more attention to the victim and secondly, that more multi-disciplinary cooperation be implemented in all relevant aspects.

Multi-disciplinary cooperation

The notion of uniting the expertise of various professions runs throughout the first part of the conclusions. Both general and preventive measures are recommended, whether they concern prevention programmes, the setting-up of a police work routine, or police training. The committee of experts was of the opinion that all professionals dealing with child victims can only act in the best interest of the child by sharing their knowledge. With this in mind, all concerned agencies should work towards multi-disciplinary cooperation, even if the best interest of the child may require the agency to put its own interests aside. For the police this may mean that the claim for prosecution of the offender take second place, if this is shown to be in the best interest of the child. Unfortunately, legislation in some countries does not give such leeway to the prosecutor or the police, as they must investigate all punishable offences which come to their attention.

Pointing out such difficulties to decision-makers could be one of the tasks of a specialist liaison officer, as recommended in the conclusions. His or her duties would be to guarantee and protect the child throughout the proceedings and to act as an intermediary for the flow of information between national and international agencies. Such liaison duties should be rather general, for example, reviewing police work routines and advising on new measures as they are introduced to the police. All activities of the liaison officer should, of course, be based on the exchange of experience with all relevant disciplines and various national and international agencies.

Law enforcement measures

The recommendations regarding law enforcement measures concentrate on the most significant problems related to offences against children. Child pornography, for instance, is rarely the subject of Interpol correspondence, in spite of the international nature of many of these cases. There is also very little exchange on sex tourism, mainly due to the lack of effective legislation on the subject in most countries.

Sabine Manke, Specialist Officer, Interpol General Secretariat. For further information: Interpol General Secretariat, 50 Quai Achille Lignon, F - 69006 Lyon, France.

Another recommendation deals with international adoptions. Normally these are considered as a civil matter and thus are not within the range of police work. However, numerous reports on illegal international adoptions or a lack of any control induced the police experts to call for better supervision of international adoptions.

The experts have also recommended that professionals dealing with children should be required to inform law enforcement agencies when it is suspected that an offence against a child has been committed. This statement is based on the conviction that a number of child abuse cases need the intervention of law enforcement agencies, however these agencies are often uninformed. This provision would ensure that a case is viewed by both law enforcement and other professionals who would reach a mutual decision in an individual case with regards to the best interest of the child.

Keeping in mind the growing number of private agencies dealing with missing children, the study group members emphasized that the police should have a major part in the search for missing children. This is not intended to curb private initiative in that field, but rather to clarify that the expertise of private agencies should serve as a supplement to police work.

International police cooperation can be a very effective instrument when its possibilities are fully utilized. The ICPO-Interpol has established a functioning network for cooperation between all 158 member countries and information on all international cases and offenders are exchanged through these channels. The Interpol General Secretariat has, as part of the network, the role of coordinating the flow of information and acting as intermediary between member countries and international organisations such as the United Nations as well as non-governmental organisations. The ICCB has for example, on several occasions, successfully cooperated with the Interpol General Secretariat, and we hope to continue this working relationship in the future. ❑

Protect potential victims of sexual exploitation

Council of Europe

A New Recommendation

Wolfgang RAU*

The Council has been working for the protection of children and the family for many years **. The Recommendation on Sexual Exploitation, Pornography and Prostitution of, and Trafficking in, Children and Young Adults * is the first text by an international organisation which deals in such a detailed and comprehensive manner with the sexual exploitation of children and young adults for lucrative purposes. It lays down guidelines for action against all forms of sexual exploitation, in other words pornography, prostitution and traffic in children and young adults. It contains a differentiated programme on criminal policy in this area, covering prevention, repression, assistance for victims, international cooperation and research.**

In the Recommendation on Sexual Exploitation, Pornography and Prostitution of, and Trafficking in, Children and Young Adults, children are defined as minors under 16 years of age and young adults as people aged between 16 and 21. However, for the purposes of implementing the Recommendation in the Council of Europe Member States, the terms *«child»* and *«young adult»* are defined in accordance with the age limits laid down in the respective national laws.

The Recommendation accords special importance to the role of the public and of organisations in the fight against the sexual exploitation of young people, stressing that criminal policy is everyone's business (cf. Recommendation R (83)7 on the role of the public in criminal policy).

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* Department of Legal Affairs, Council of Europe, Strasbourg, France. Extracts, "Droit de l'Enfance et de la Famille", Paris, 1992. *Original in French.*

Preventive measures

To prevent the sexual exploitation of children and young adults, it is necessary to carry out a campaign of consciousness-raising, education and information aimed at a wide range of target groups likely to be involved in one way or another in sexual exploitation. These include:

- children, young adults (potential victims)
- parents, guardians of under-age children, relevant associations
- those involved in supervising and protecting children and young adults in areas such as education, health, social work, the legal service and the police
- public opinion and the media.

Potential victims of sexual exploitation must be given precise information to warn them about the risks of sexual victimisation. This information should be dispensed as part of ordinary teaching in schools, for example as part of activities aimed at making primary school children aware of the world around them or as part of biology and sex education lessons in secondary schools.

Systematic, detailed documentation covering all forms of sexual exploitation should be made available to parents, people entrusted with the custody of minors and associations working for the welfare of young people, designed to help them in their educational work (§A.1). The information needs of teachers, doctors, judges, etc. are more specific.

The effectiveness of specific action of this kind depends, at least in part, on the acknowledgement by the general public of the seriousness of the problem of sexual exploitation and its awareness of the commercialisation of sex and its damaging effects on the well-being of young people (§A.4).

The media, which sometimes encourage the commercialisation of children's bodies by means of semi-erotic advertising, are urged to realise its trivialising and harmful effect. They should contribute to the generation of public awareness of the devastating effects of sexual exploitation and shoulder their responsibilities by adopting a relevant code of ethics (§A.5). The same applies to advertising agencies which sometimes rely, more or less frankly, on the impact of juvenile seduction. They must subscribe to rules of conduct ensuring respect for children; otherwise statutory control may prove necessary (§A.6).

A judicious preventive strategy will also be based on the collection and exchange of relevant information. When preparing the Recommendation, it became obvious that the extent of the problem of sexual exploitation could not be assessed properly because of the lack of statistics. In order to counter this, public institutions and agencies (law enforcement and youth protection bodies, hospitals, etc.) as well as voluntary bodies concerned with the care of victims should, as an initial step, gather all the relevant data that they can. Such data, although piecemeal, might be made available to research workers and crime policy-makers, while preserving anonymity and confidentiality of the individual cases to which the data relate. Later, efforts could be made to coordinate statistics from different sources in order to build up as comprehensive a picture of the problem as possible (§A.7).

Measures relating to the prostitution of children and young adults

The Recommendation also discusses the need to curb sex tourism and dissuade travel agencies that organise this (§C.5). This means identifying the agencies involved and compiling information on the conduct of organised trips, the services provided for travellers and, in particular, the advertising strategy which often includes thinly-veiled hints regarding the tolerant attitude in the host country (for instance,

ILO

Study on child Labour in the hotel, catering and tourism sector

As part of the Interdepartmental Project on the Elimination of Child Labour, the Hotel and Tourism Branch of the ILO has just launched a research project on Child Labour in the Hotel, Catering and Tourism Sector aimed at getting insight into the nature and dimensions of child labour in this industry and ways of combatting it.

The information will be collected through a literature survey and field case-studies. The study is intended to have an impact by identifying and promoting practical action directed at the supply side at national and local levels and by creating public awareness among tourists and local "consumers" so as to reduce the demand for it.

Sexual exploitation is part of the study as one of the elements of child labour in the hotel, catering and tourism sector.

Entertainment, relaxation and sexual services form an important part of the services provided for by the establishments covered by the study. When young boys and girls dance, sing, perform a striptease or other sexually prickling activities or sell their body, they have become the "product" themselves, they have become consumer goods. The visitor or client can no longer ignore the type of work, the working conditions and the age of the worker. Moreover, entertainment, relaxation and in particular sexual services, have become subject to a price mechanism in which the age of those rendering the service, their vulnerability and even their state of subordination raises the price, thus leading to one of the worst forms of child exploitation. Although this area has been poorly researched for reasons that it is both illegal and unsavoury, there is proof of marketing links between child prostitution and other forms of abuse, such as child pornography and drug trafficking.

For more information: ILO, 4 route des Morillons, CH - 1211 Geneva 22, Switzerland Tel. (41-22) 799 61 11.

advertisements for hotels specifically geared to unaccompanied travellers). Moreover, cooperation must be established at international level: this might lead to a global strategy of «dissuasion» and denunciation in which voluntary associations might participate.

International cooperation

Signing relevant international conventions is the first step towards reinforcing cooperation. The instruments mentioned in the Recommendation include the United Nations Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and the Exploitation and Prostitution of Others (1950) and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) (§II.1). The second essential step would be to establish extraterritorial jurisdiction with a view to prosecuting and penalising nationals who have sexually exploited children and young adults outside the national territory (§II.2).

It goes without saying that the signing and ratification of international conventions and the establishment of extraterritorial powers in the event of infringements relating to sexual exploitation would not produce tangible results unless this is accompanied by a genuine exchange of information between countries (§II.3). In this connection, the value of the assistance of international associations and organisations working for the welfare of children is emphasised. In many cases, moreover, owing to their presence in the field, they possess relevant information which can prove useful for the prosecuting authorities (§II.4).

Germany

A new law against child pornography

The German Government is adopting a law which aims at strengthening the fight against child pornography. The possession of child pornography will be punishable by a sentence of one year's imprisonment. The production of and trade in child pornography documents will be punishable by a maximum sentence of three years imprisonment.

"Prostitution et Société", No. 97, 1992.

Research priorities

There is a blatant lack of precise information on the sexual exploitation of children and young adults. This is still a grey area. (...) Research must be stepped up in order to underpin the action already undertaken here. We will confine ourselves to mentioning just three of the ten subjects laid down in the Recommendation: the nature of paedophilia and contributing factors, links between the sex industry and organised crime, and the possibilities and limitations of the criminal justice system as an instrument of prevention and suppression of different forms of sexual exploitation of children and young adults.

It is not enough simply to create new kinds of infringements. These must be reflected in an appropriate, credible criminal policy. This kind of policy can only be pursued with a total disregard of political considerations. It can only succeed if it has the active support of the politicians and legal and administrative officials whose job it is to implement it. It should not be forgotten that an effective criminal policy in the area of the sexual exploitation of young people (as well as a suitable social policy) requires increased human and material resources.

The great importance which the governments of Members States of the Council of Europe attached to the drafting of this Recommendation and the active interest with which they have followed its preparation are vital and promising preconditions for the implementation of it. ❑

United Nations Programme of Action

for the Prevention of the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography

The United Nations Programme of Action presents a series of detailed measures to prevent the trafficking in and sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography at the national, regional and international levels. These measures cover the fields of information, education, assistance and rehabilitation, legislative measures and a strengthening of law enforcement.

The Programme of Action invites States to consider it both in relation to the implementation of the Plan of Action for the World Declaration on the Survival, Protection and Development of Children in the 1990s and of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The text of the Programme of Action is available from UN offices around the world, or from ICCB.

** 1949 European Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms (Art. 8), 1963 Social Charter (Arts. 16 and 17), Recommendation 1065 (1987) concerning traffic and other forms of exploitation of children, Resolution no. 3 on the fundamental principles relating to an effective struggle against the sexual abuse of young people.

*** Recommendation No. R(91)11 on Sexual Exploitation, Pornography and Prostitution of, and Trafficking in, Children and Young Adults.

**** Countries which are members of the Council of Europe: Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom
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iccb

The International Catholic Child Bureau (ICCB), founded in France in 1948, is an International Catholic Organization grouping together organisations and individuals working for children in more than forty countries. The ICCB provides the means whereby all those concerned with defending children's interests can come together at the international level and join their efforts in the realisation of concrete projects for service to children.

The ICCB initiated the International Year of the Child (1979), and launched an international programme for street children (1982). The ICCB is active in various programmes at the present time:

- ▲ Psycho-social needs of refugee children
- ▲ Hidden handicapped children
- ▲ Street children and drug abuse
- ▲ Sexually exploited children (Prostitution - Pornography)
- ▲ Intercultural training of educators
- ▲ Children and media
- ▲ Child-to-Child (a health education programme)
- ▲ Medico-Educational and Psycho-Social Special Care

In all its programmes the ICCB takes into account **four essential dimensions:**

- ▲ Spiritual growth
- ▲ The family
- ▲ Intercultural understanding
- ▲ The rights of the child

The ICCB has consultative status with ECOSOC, UNESCO, UNICEF and the Council of Europe.

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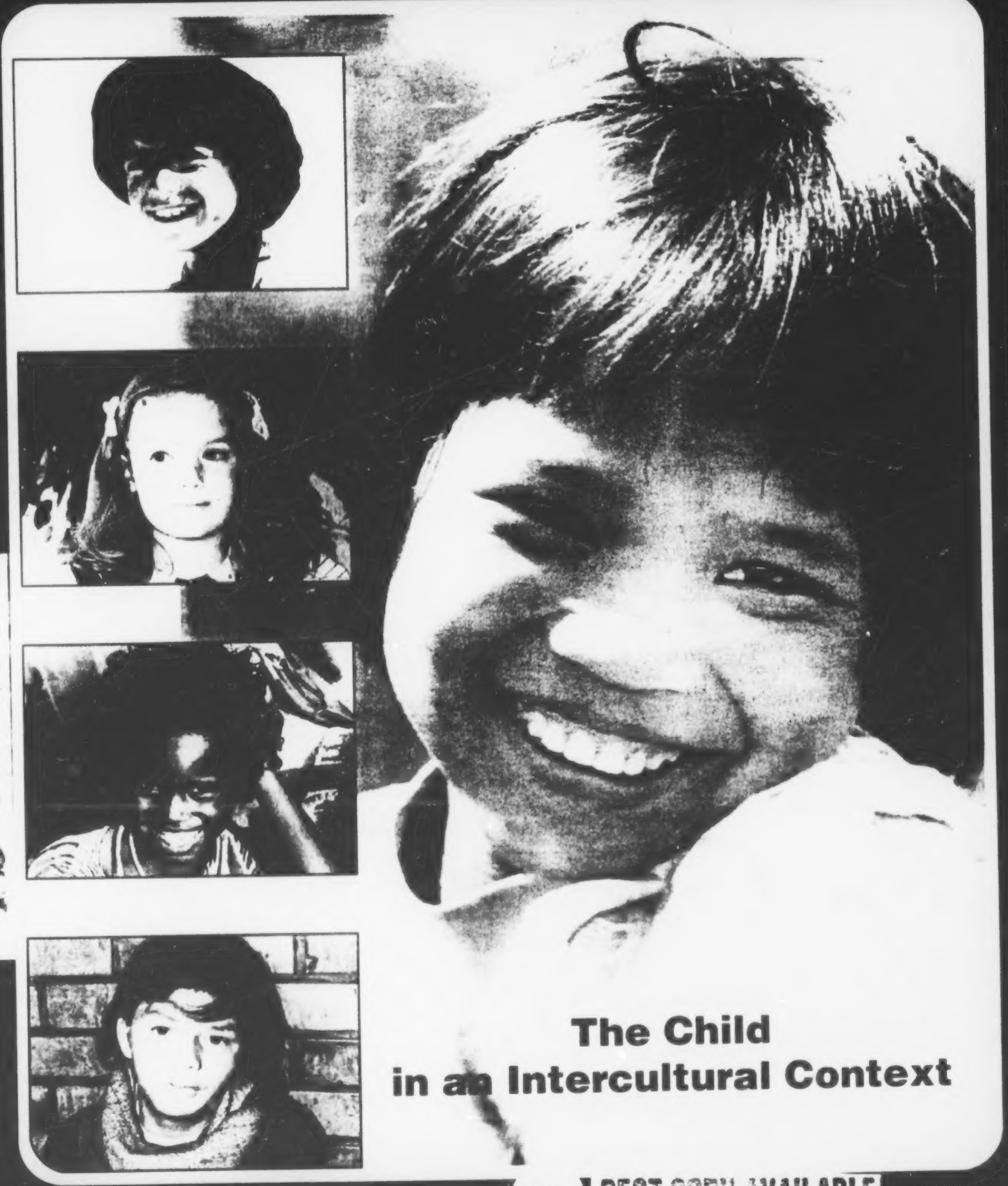

The Child in an Intercultural Context

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The Child and Interculturalism

The meeting of cultures does not only take place out in the field. In selecting interculturalism as a reference for action, an organisation such as ICCB must itself take up the challenge, i.e., by promoting a debate on the issue of childhood that takes account of the various approaches and traditions represented by people who are culturally different. This is what we attempted to do at the Seminar on "Children in an Intercultural Context" in Birmingham. The attempt followed three years of discussion and action on this theme. The geographical isolation of ICCB staff and experts restricts the communication of their culture with one another to rare occasions. While the language barrier, in spite of translation, is insurmountable, physical presence, gestures, facial expressions and intonation of the voice do provide a bridging point to transmit messages for those who know how to perceive them.

The common ground for all is represented by the essential child, which we have all been and to which we aspire. This is the essence of Christmas. It is both a link between our actions and their guarantor. It is He, whom we find within the suffering child, the disfigured victim of our totalitarian attitudes. He is the one who still allows us to hope.

Birmingham plunged us into an English culture, flavoured with Indian curry and confronted with "ethnic minority" cultural divisions. Torn between the 5 continents that share - more or less - the advantages and disadvantages of the technological era, we were able to stand back and savour the difference, measuring the relativity of our miraculous remedies.

The following texts give an overview only of the main themes of the conference papers, since we decided not to publish the proceedings of this seminar. The significance of the meeting lay much more in the quality of on-the-spot sharing and learning than on academic talks and a glossy final report at the end of it all. Non-western cultures do not in fact set much store by the written word. They attach more importance to the spoken word, thus the significance of memory work. For those who were unable to attend the seminar may they strive to practise the principles of interculturalism. May those who spoke at it not feel frustrated in seeing their speeches reproduced only in outline:[*] their message is engraved in our memories and will be transmitted in another way.

The objective of greater sensitivity to interculturalism, which the ICCB General Assembly set itself in 1989, will be achieved if the ICCB manages to incorporate respect for the dignity of children in their cultural contexts into each one of its actions, and even each one of its thoughts. This will be our contribution to the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.

François RUEGG,
ICCB Secretary General

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[*] The complete texts of the interventions are available from the ICCB General Secretariat.

Values to be lived and transmitted need a culturally coherent context. For, in the extremely mobile and changing societies in which ever increasing numbers of children are living, many systems of values coexist or confront each other. Simultaneously, traditional references of authority collapse: parents and teachers are replaced frequently by the media. The child is disturbed to varying degrees: from apathy to deviant behaviour, more or less violent; and sometimes even physical troubles hindering their social integration.

The Child in an Intercultural Context

ICCB Seminar
Birmingham, Great Britain, 25-27 April 1992

Situated at the crossroads of research and action, the ICCB is particularly well placed to gather together ideas and experiences which could inspire and orient those who have to deal with the consequences of culture shock. In January 1988, the ICCB started a programme on intercultural education, which is concerned not only with reflecting on the question, but also with studying the applications likely to limit the negative effects of culture shock, such as marginalisation or fanaticism.

In order to avoid being closed in on pure speculation, the ICCB proposed applying its ideas to real life situations, taking advantage of the rich experience of one of its members "L'Association des Alouettes" (France), which welcomes street children in a multicultural context. At the same time, it undertook a study in order to identify the values emerging from a multicultural community to verify the data. The results of this work are included in two publications: "Enfants deracinés" by M.-J. Colonui (Editions Ouverture, Lausanne, 1989) and "The Child on the Intercultural Scene" (ICCB, Geneva, 1992). It is in this perspective that the ICCB chose the theme **Intercultural education** for the years 1990, 1991 and 1992.

The ICCB wished to draw conclusions from three years of research and action during a seminar on "The Child in an Intercultural Context". This seminar, which brought together participants from more than 20 countries, was held in Birmingham, Great Britain (25-27 April 1992), at the Multi-Faith Centre - a centre for meetings, training courses and incultural and interconfessional activities. The Seminar had **two objectives**:

◆ to give the participants a global

overview of the intercultural phenomenon and of the manner in which it affects children on diverse continents;

◆ to create a synergy among the actors of the ICCB, i.e., first of all sharing and then promoting an approach which takes into consideration the cultural and intercultural dimension in order to better serve children.

The sessions of this Seminar successively tackled **four main discussion areas**:

◆ **Acknowledgement of interculturalism** and its **effects** and the need for a new outlook, for a greater senstivity that enables the variety and the differences of cultures to be seen in a perspective of rehabilitation of the contemporary child.

◆ Rapid analysis of different **interdenominational contexts**, Hindus, Muslims, Buddhists, Sikhs (participation in a prayer meeting, followed by a meal and a meeting with an official of the local Sikh community), that conditions in an original way the development and growth of the child, in his/her family, community and town.

◆ Inventory of certain **socio-political contexts** specific to the differents continents, which bring out typical cases - some of them extreme - of situations of children who are poor, deprived, uprooted, disabled etc.

◆ Presentation of some **successful intercultural experiences** in favour of children, in very difficult situations and using innovative techniques, in order to formulate more universal solutions.

Programme of the Seminar

Saturday, 25 April

11h00-13h45 **Opening Session**
Chair : **Amin Fahim**

◆ Opening of the Seminar (**Amin Fahim**) and Welcome to the Multi-Faith Centre (**Dr. Mary Hall**)

◆ Culture :the Forgotten Dimension - **François Rüegg**

◆ The Effects of Poverty and Marginalization on Child Development - **Dr. Edgardo Menvielle**

15h15-18h00 **The Child and the Dialogue Between Religions**
Chair : **Mary Hall**

◆ Introduction to the Multi-Faith Centre and its work - **Dr. Mary Hall and Team**

◆ Hindu, Muslim and Buddhist Perspectives (followed by questions)

19h30-21h00 Visit to Sikh Temple

Sunday, 26 April

10h00-16h00 **Socio-Political Aspects of the Intercultural**
Chair : **Jorge Serrano**

◆ Eastern Europe : Child Abandonment - **Robert Vitillo**

◆ Africa :Urban Children and Youths in Difficult Circumstances - **Djakaridja Koné** (cf. CW 2/92 p.9)

◆ Asia : Intercultural Dynamics between Western and Local Values - **Mina Ramirez**

◆ Latin America : A Culture of Urban Poverty - **Mgr. Luis Del Castillo**

◆ Middle East : Fundamentalism and its Effects on Children - **Amin Fahim**

◆ Europe/North America :Challenges of Intercultural Education in Schools - **Xavier Subtil**

16h00-17h15 Discussion groups

Monday, 27 April

8h30-11h30 **Cultural Traditions as a Tool for Pedagogy - Examples / Models**
Chair : **François Rüegg**

◆ **Introduction** : A Christian Vision of Addressing the Intercultural - **Marie-Jeanne Coloni**

◆ Working with Disabled Children and Youth in a Multicultural Community - **Mary-Therese Harrington**

◆ Bi-culturality - **Youssef Majri**

◆ Family, Community and Forced Migration - **Shirley Fozzard**

◆ The Child, Learning and Disability in Pakistan and Great Britain - **Christine Miles**

◆ Parenting in a New Culture : a report of pilot parent support/ education groups for Cambodian refugee families - **Dan Scheinfeld**

◆ Bolivia, Children and Adolescents in the Pluricultural Reality - **Juan Carlos Nunez**

◆ Using Oral Traditions - **Sally Despois**

◆ The Use of Musice - **Marianne Sébastien**

11h30-15h45 : Discussion groups and general debate

16h00-16h30 : ICCB Contribution to the World Decade for Cultural Development , 1988-1997 - **François Coudreau**

Culture, the Forgotten Dimension

François RUEGG

Today we are still basking in the ideology of development even though some bodies including the United Nations have publicly acknowledged the failure of several decades of development. This development ideology implies limitless growth and linear development, the agent of this being the West, which is seen as Civilisation.

The yardstick by which advancement and development are measured is of course economic capacity, which in turn regulates technological capacity. The «less developed» countries are therefore those which have not succeeded in taking off economically. To add some spice to this game, the debt system was invented ... The media continue to display maps showing the gap between incomes in the North and the South. Nobody has yet come up with a map showing an index of creativity, ingenuity, economy of resources, in short, culture, for the good reason that these cannot be quantified. One method adopted by the critics of inadequate development has consequently been to blame economic growth and oppose it, to some extent, to culture.

The tradition of the Enlightenment

The «discovery» of the autonomy of reason had considerable implications for European culture in the 18th century. It cut us off from our heavenly origins and from our cultural links with God. The Enlightenment gave birth to a new pedagogic project: «instead of growing up in the midst of inactivity and looking after cattle, children should be accustomed in time to work and exhorted to spin and card wool, knit, make lace, etc. Parents would themselves exhort their children to spin and devote themselves to these other activities if they had the opportunity to sell the labour of their children to factories.» Thus wrote an Enlightened man in 1777.

Our message to our children today is scarcely better since it provides them with a totally negative image of the «Third World»: the naked savage has been replaced with a savage in rags ... instead of brandishing a lance, he holds out his hand. He has been pacified, mastered.

Under the same heading one cannot omit the omnipotence of scientific religion: it emerged in the same century from the emancipation of the individual on the basis of reason. It plays a particularly important role in development circles since it claims to apply the principles of physical sciences to the social and political sciences. Social science would even be capable of controlling the future on the basis of its scientific observations. The image of the clock and its mechanisms, so beloved of the Encyclopaedists, has become a caricature, and the disaster caused by scientific materialism should have discouraged us from attempting to find a scientific solution to the problems of our times.

The basis of culture

Has culture been forgotten in development? What this in effect means is that man has been forgotten, and even more so, children. Culture is what distinguishes mankind in Creation - not Beethoven's 5th Symphony compared with African dances - but mankind's relationship with the Invisible, his position as a child of God. When a development project replaces earth with cement, thatch with tiles, polyculture with monoculture, the loincloth with jeans, the school of life with the school of paper, it forgets about culture. It is addressing matter, not man. Several authors have therefore proposed «development with a human face», an alternative form of development which refers to human rights. There is a great risk of slipping back into enlightened paternalism, of acting as though other people «were not big enough» to formulate and manage their culture themselves. It might be a useful exercise to ask ourselves whether we would like some «natives» of some exotic cultures to come and question the way we live: constant bustling, deadly road traffic, couples living together without being married, skimpy clothes, urban crowding, constant noise, not to mention of course the consumption of energy and material goods ... Traditionally, it is the relationship between culture and the Invisible that ensures a certain balance, a certain moderation.

The dignity of children - the measure for our actions

The concept of human dignity is not a magic word. It is interesting in so far as it obliges us to undertake a fundamental approach: to take time to treat the human groups or persons we meet with respect, by waiting, listening and interpreting. This approach short-circuits the power struggle, the relationship between donor and beneficiary, rich and poor, developed and underdeveloped, etc. Furthermore, it forces us to modesty and self-denial. «Wanting to understand the other is what holds back dialogue», wrote a researcher recently. Putting this philosophy into practice means rejecting the idea that what is good for me is good for everyone else. But it also means accepting the principle that what is good for someone else may also be good for me. One might well wonder, in this context, whether the Gospels do not need to be stripped of, rather than injected with, cultural references. ❑

The Effects of Poverty and Marginalization on Child Development

Edgardo MENVIELLE *

Economically deprived children from poor backgrounds are subject to more and greater pressure. But it is, however, interesting to note that certain personal and social factors enable them to react positively when confronted with unfavourable situations.

Poverty can be defined by a lack of access to the activities available in society. Notions of poverty that overlook the causal role of social structures and treat poverty as a condition transmitted from generation to generation due to "personality traits" underestimate the potential benefits of concrete relief and mental health interventions for preventing some of the noxious effects of poverty on human development. Such views also contribute to justify society's failure to address the causes of poverty.

Direct and indirect risk factors

Poverty limits the range of experiences which are necessary for children to develop to full potential. Children in poverty are subject to a greater number of stresses and these stresses are of greater severity. Children in poverty also lack many protective mechanisms. Therefore, life stresses have a more negative effect and life rewards are meager. Known risk factors are both direct and indirect. Direct risk factors include a lack of proper prenatal nutrition and medical care, deficient nutrition, environmental intoxicants, higher incidence and greater severity of physical, emotional and behavioral disorders, and lack of educational opportunities. Indirect risk factors stem from both difficulties within the family and lack of support to the family. Parents' ability to function as nurturing caretakers is often thwarted by the chronic adverse conditions associated with poverty. The emotional toll of poverty tends to affect the parents' marital relationship as well as their interactions with their children. Those children who have a combination of both personal and parental risk factors, such as a difficult temperament and parent's depression or family discord, are more likely to have developmental and behavioral difficulties. Furthermore, children with such difficulties are unable to take full advantage of education and social support.

Of great interest are those personal and environmental factors that allow certain children (and families) in poverty, to develop appropriately, vis-a-vis the same adverse conditions which frustrate the potential of others. This resiliency has been the focus of studies such as the Kauai longitudinal study, which provides insight into the processes by which resilient children escape from, or at least manage better the detrimental effects of continuous disadvantage.

Principles for successful programmes

Effective mental health interventions should aim at opening up opportunities for family growth by promoting known protective mechanisms and empowering families to foster their children's development. What are the general principles which make programmes for socially disadvantaged children more successful ? Interventions must start at the early developmental stages, provide intensive services on a continuous and uninterrupted fashion, must be family centered, must provide a comprehensive range of services and must be delivered by caring and flexible staff. Although all the attributes are desirable, it is rare that a given program would meet all of these conditions. However, specific examples of successful programmes illuminate some of the manners by which they accomplish their goals. The role of mental health practitioners will be decisive when they contribute the skills necessary to avoid intrusiveness, lecturing, and to enable people to get the support they need and help them to define their goals for themselves. Programmes should focus on events and their consequences and ways of reducing their negative impact and not on the alleged psychological deficits of the people that they serve. ❑

Child psychiatrist, Children's Hospital National Medical Center, Washington D.C., USA.

Child Abandonment in Eastern Europe

The Experience of Romania

Rev. Robert J. VITILLO *

The plight of hundreds of thousands institutionalized children living in deplorable conditions in Romania was widely publicized throughout the world. Accurate statistics are still hard to come by, but it seems that only a small percentage of these children have been abandoned by their biological parents in the full sense of the term. Countless others, however, have been at least seriously neglected, if not fully abandoned, both by families and by society as a whole, since they remain in institutions, receiving care only according to minimally human standards and are not afforded any permanent plan for their future growth and development.

What were the root causes of this massive abandonment and literal condemnation to death for a countless number of Romania's most vulnerable children ?

One can identify a myriad of root causes for such a phenomenon. The political oppression by an irrational dictator, who was interested only in maintaining high numbers in population reports for Romania, made it illegal and impossible to adopt appropriate family planning measures. The social and economic desperation caused parents who had already given birth to more than five children to leave unwanted additional children in the hospital for the State to arrange their care. The utilitarian system saw no value in handicapped persons and therefore promoted the wholesale institutionalization of children who could not grow up to be "productive" members of society. Professionals trained in an antiquated medical and psychological model encouraged parents to "put away" those children who were not seen as "normal" and then made no efforts at rehabilitating such children. Political and social corruption encouraged the "sale" of children within a poorly developed child welfare and adoption system.

Church-related organizations were among the first humanitarian efforts to respond to this crisis. Emergency food, medecine, and basic sanitation and human comforts were provided to the institutionalized children. An appeal was made to the Romanian state to stop the sale of children in uncontrolled foreign adoptions. Alternative group care facilities and domestic adoptions have been promoted in the country. The infrastructure for a just child welfare system is now being developed.

A much needed resource in Romania and in other parts of Eastern Europe is that of current professional literature and audiovisual materials in the fields of medicine, psychology, social work, and legal practice.

Let us also make ourselves available to share time and experience with our colleagues in Romania, Eastern Europe, and in other parts of the world as well. It seems necessary to offer one caveat with this recommendation - that is, to constantly maintain respect for the cultural sensitivities and self - determination of our colleagues as we offer our own experience and expertise. Solutions for child abandonment and long-term institutionalization of children must be found by citizens of the affected countries. We cannot import packaged models of service from the West of the North; we must also remember that many such problems continue to plague the North and the West as well, and that any progress there has been in our child welfare systems has occurred only through long periods of time and with much individual and collective struggle on the part of professionals and persons of good will.

Pope John Paul II, in his Lenten message of 1988, raised a plaintive cry for the sake of needy and defenseless children. It is my firm opinion that his words offer us a blueprint as individuals and as members of international church-related organizations to respond to the needs of abandoned children throughout the world: *"I strongly urge you... to allow the Spirit of God to take hold of you, to break the chains of selfishness and sin. In a spirit of solidarity, share with those who have fewer resources than yourselves. Give, not only the things you can spare, but the things you may perhaps need, in order to lend your generous support to the actions and projects of the local Church especially to ensure a just future for children who are least protected."* ❑

Director of programmes, Caritas Internationalis, Rome, Italy.

Intercultural Dynamics between Western and Local Values

Mina M. RAMIREZ *

Societies of developing and under-developed countries in Asia are constituted for at least half of the population by children and youth seventeen years and below. Population growth is not likely to diminish even if mortality rates decrease. However, while children and youth could constitute the vital energy for development of Asian countries, their institutional leaders - be these of the political, economic, social, religio-cultural - cannot respond adequately to the people's basic needs. This situation is not promising for the great majority of Asia's children.

Only the children and the youth of families who have access to formal schooling could have better life chances: understandably so since it is the educational system that teaches how to live in the monetary culture.

Children who are materially poor become survivors in hostile environments. They have to try to eke an existence by all means. In this struggle, many of the materially poor children acquire an inner resource, which, if channelled to positive ends, could be assets to their communities and societies.

Here, we have to do with children of two levels - the children who are fortunate to have access to the dominant system through families who could give them schooling, although not necessarily an education that makes them look beyond their "family walls". These children are in the formal system of education. They could have better chances of growth (although not necessarily) since they tend to be reared to see schooling as merely a way to advance materially.

Secondly, there are the materially poor, products of popular cultural systems, with little or less schooling. They speak their own languages and they get educated in their communities. Since the monetary culture impinges on them, they try by all means to secure what presently they realize is needed in life - money, something so alien to them, since traditionally they have lived by face to face exchanges of goods and services (barter system). The discipline of productivity consciousness, cost-consciousness, and savings consciousness - may not be operating in the majority of Asian familes.

The millions of suffering children in Asia

The double-faced society should be a challenge to institutional leaders. Amidst the diversity of popular cultures, across which the dominant system (the monetary cultural system) cuts, it is important that they discover approaches toward promoting a dignified life for all. The children of the rich need to have less in order to BE more (in the words of Barbara Ward) while the children of the poor and the extremely marginalized need to have more in order to BE more (in the words of Populorum Progressio).

Because institutional leaders have not been adequately responding to needs, especially of marginalized children, these children have creatively found ways of meeting their own needs.

To a certain extent they have been forced into adulthood. Sometimes it is even they who become breadwinners for their parents. Any venture in which children could have access to money would be encouraged by the parents. Thus, the phenomenon of child labour in the farms, in the city streets, even as child prostitutes.

Marginalized children of Asian countries suffer from undernourishment, sickness, poor housing conditions, little or no schooling, maltreatment from their elders, and family disintegration. The latter problem is experienced also by children of the better-off families. The general well-being of children is further threatened by natural calamities, as well as violence among power-hungry adults.

Mass media with its consumeristic and materialistic values projected through advertisements over radio, TV, as well as print cannot but deepen the frustration of many a child. If the mentality projected is that "being means having," children who have little acquire a low self-esteem: they may lose all creativity.

The global dimension of the reality

The economic order as well as the information and communication order are world systems that impinge on all societies - developed and developing. In Asia, while the majority of families have limited resources, the influence of advertisements through mass media is pervasive. In fact, children and youth are the targets of these ads. In societies where many children cannot have three meals a day, the impact of such an influence could dampen children's capacity to respond fully to their needs.

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* Director of the Asian Social Institute, Manila, Philippines.

The family in Asia is paradoxically both the source of security and the cause of insecurity. As source of security, it may be the only stable institution. Since the larger society does not have an elaborate social security system like in countries of the West, families tend to work only for themselves even at the expense of other families. This way, families become a cause of insecurity. Children who are caught in this process acquire familistic values, too familistic, which may become dysfunctional to nation-building.

Children's associations and youth movements could become an energy force toward tapping children's potentials for family and community building. Their programs and activities could be a way to make them realize their dignity.

The children of the dominant system (formal schooling) should be given the opportunity to appreciate the profound cultural values of children in the popular cultural systems while those of the popular cultural system should try to be given access to the discipline of the monetary system. A symbol of the popular cultural system is sharing of food. This unites, while money, the product of the dominant system, divides, except when money flows through cooperatives.

Popular cultures have profound religious values. They are embedded in the experiences expressed by their respective languages. In search of fullness of life, we can take off from the profound values of Asian religions revolving on respect for life and all life forms, interconnectedness of all life forms, trust in the God-within-us, contemplative practices, a familial view of societies, mutual help and native cooperativism, and warm human relations.

Our children challenge us to our responsibility as adults. They try to be responsible for their lives. How could we create a place where they could rest from their toil, lessen their suffering... where we may be able to trigger in them a consciousness of their deeper life aspirations; where we may be able to listen to their dreams; where we could be supportive of their creative efforts?

Our children are our creation. And transforming our environment is to co-create with God in improving the conditions wherein our children could be transformed from persons to personalities aware of their relatedness to God, to the material cosmos, to self, to family, and to community and society.

Europe/North America

The Challenges of Intercultural Education in Schools

Brother Xavier SUBTIL *

Intercultural education in European and American schools remains a challenge for teachers, as well as pupils and their parents. The intermixing of cultures gradually changes the environment of children. It is the duty of schools to awaken children to this intercultural situation, and integrate underprivileged children in this process.

To take up the challenge of interculturalism, schools must set themselves the following **objectives**:

- ◆ greater familiarity with the environment of the poorest, which involves a shift in the psychological and topographic approach of those involved in education
- ◆ a global approach to the shortages suffered by the poorest, of which the lack of education is just one element
- ◆ the development of the human potential of children and young people in the Fourth World who must be the protagonists of their own destiny
- ◆ a critical view of society when it itself engenders marginalisation.

The **methods** of achieving these objectives might include the following:

- ◆ the formulation of a sound body of doctrine in order to be able to maintain this open attitude to those who are «most foreign» to us
- ◆ practical training for all pupils on justice during their training in humanities
- ◆ the involvement of all members of the educational community in an open policy of sharing knowledge.

There is only one way to redress the denial of human rights to foreigners and the poor. This is through friendship, through respect for what they have experienced and for the pride they have in adding to the collective memory. But it is only by starting to discover the value of the poorest that we can ourselves welcome any foreigner whoever he/she may be.

The intercultural challenge is not simply a theoretical issue. It touches and questions our very being. «Jesus watched the multitude putting money into the treasury. Many rich people put in large sums.» Our technological society has multiplied the cultural riches destined to satisfy and pander to our leisure activities, going far beyond our essential needs. «... this poor widow has put in more than all those who are contributing to the treasury. For they all contributed out of their abundance; but she out of her poverty has put in everything she had, her whole living.»

Thus, Jesus gives enormous power to this poor woman: that of establishing a civilisation where each person, living human life to the full, sets himself the target of sharing what he is as well as what he has. This is the challenge that the Gospel puts to the educational community. ❑

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* Brothers of the Christian Schools, Reims, France. *Original in French.*

An Urban Poverty Culture

Mgr. Luis DEL CASTILLO *

The cultural complexity of Latin American society consists of ambivalence, internal contradictions and conflict.

Contradiction: between productive dynamism on the one hand, the will to integrate into an international economy and adhere to the standards of industrialised societies and highly competitive environments, and fundamental shortcomings regarding critical living conditions, and isolation in relation to standards and values on the other. In the streets of Sao Paulo, executives from advanced technology companies cross paths with the underground train «surfers», children who jump onto the roofs of moving waggons, risking their lives to escape from the police, or simply to amuse themselves.

Conflict: in inter-cultural relations, which is all the more acute since the mechanisms of participation and interaction are blocked and sealed off. Reality is much more dynamic and fluid than plans, policies and programmes. The responses these provide are slow, hampered by red tape, the fears of politicians, and the needs of those formulating them.

Cultural complexity: that is accentuated by the rich-poor division. Without launching into a debate on the terminological scope of the concept of «poverty culture», can we ignore the fact that a large section of the population facing tough living conditions, deprived of mechanisms that would allow them to integrate and improve their situation, have developed their own set of standards, values and survival strategies that function like internal socialisation mechanisms and give meaning to the lives of members of a group? In reacting to the disintegration caused by poverty, they have produced internal integration which generates values, attitudes, symbols and languages that can only be de-coded in their own context, but which causes at the same time a fragmentation, rupture and destruction of established social models. The family image is broken up, giving way to images that are difficult to define: what does the word «father» mean to a street kid in Bogota?

Revising our action programmes

It is high time to revise the criteria governing our social programmes and educational policies.

A new type of social action and family support programme is required: one that is more realistic, decentralised, embedded in the local environment and capable of mobilising local resources that are often under-employed, and of promoting both the individual and the creation of the group.

We need educational action that supports the building of a democratic society and takes account of the co-existence of several systems of values, the collapse of traditional references, the uprooting of children which plunges them into apathy, confronting them with a life model transmitted by invasive media which is beyond their grasp.

Both instruments, social and family policies and educational plans, must be applied hand in hand so that the rich-poor cultural duality gives way to integration that will halt the unfair distribution of goods and knowledge. ❑

President of the Consultative Committee of the ICCB Secretariat, Montevideo, Uruguay.
Original in Spanish.

It is a mistake to wish to safeguard those values which are specific to a particular religion or culture, while systematically rejecting those of others and to impose by force a return to past ways. This closing of the mind impairs the development of a society and thus inhibits the full development of children. A spirit of openness which counters these trends exposes itself automatically to harassment from different denominational groups. However, it is important to persevere in this and to develop an intercultural dimension from childhood onwards.

Fundamentalism and its Effects on Children

Amin FAHIM *

In taking Egypt as an example, I have chosen a multi-cultural environment, i.e., a Muslim and Christian context. By definition, integrationist fundamentalism means excluding the other - those who do not think like us. This applies to every religion. Egypt currently has 57 million inhabitants, of whom around 8 million are Christians. Christian and Muslim children being born in Egypt at the moment are faced with two rigid positions which have not changed since the 5th and 6th centuries.

Egypt is slowly becoming Islamized. The repercussions of such fundamentalism are significant for children. Let us take the example of the media and educational programmes.

Not long ago, 20% of television programmes were Islamic religious programmes, some of which upset Christians, derided them and showed people who had been converted to Islam, all at peak viewing hours. Consequently, Christian children watching television were bound to become confused and start asking questions. The response from their parents was that theirs is the right religion.

Already at kindergarten, children are asking each other what religion they are, and the replies decide who sits beside who.

Official school curricula have been modified: examples of grammar are taken from the Koran. Another example of the division: a book for children in the second year of primary school contains multiple choice questions such as: my religion is: a) Judaism b) Christianity c) Islam. My book is: a) the Torah b) the Bible c) the Koran. The children are supposed to cross out the wrong answers. If children answer in accordance with the curriculum, they will have to face their parents' anger. If they reply according to their religion, they will be looked upon with suspicion at school.

In such a multi-cultural environment children are troubled. They are aware that there is difference and division. Christian children find that the difference is to their disadvantage. They start to become apathetic, and a «minority» complex sets in.

The Association of Christian Schools of Upper Egypt tackles the problem at its root through educational and development programmes in the villages, in other words it attempts to accustom children at a very early age to accept each other, like each other and carry out projects together. For instance, the Association managed to get a well-known Muslim to give a training session to teachers of Islam in the Association's 38 schools. Professor Mohammed Chaalane, head of the psychiatric section at the (Islamic) University of Al Azhar, Cairo, led a session for these catechists in order to help them bring God to children, through the curriculum, in the same spirit as the one we use to bring God to Christian children through the catechism. This enables children of both religions to trust in the love of God so that they can accept each other and, later on, build their society together. There is still hope. In fact, several Muslims and Christians think in the same way and share the same spiritual and national ideal.

The Association also attempts to cooperate more closely with the local authorities either through joint projects or specific events organised on the occasion of a local or national event. The population is gradually becoming aware that the division does not exist and that forces are intruding in our own culture and trying to separate us into two antagonistic clans. As for the children, whether Christian or Muslim, they respond vigorously and enthusiastically to this appeal for union based on love.

«If you want peace, you must start with children.» ❑

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* President of ICCB, President and Director General of the Association of Upper Egypt for Schools and Social Promotion, President of the Conference of International Catholic Organizations, Cairo. *Original in French*

Cultural Differences : The Divine Visage Shines Through

Portraits of four uprooted human beings

Marie-Jeanne COLONI *

A theologian, M.J. Coloni describes the divine side of the intercultural situation using the lives of four great saints. The author outlines the outstanding features of the childhood of these four «uprooted» men.

In the fifth century, **St. Patrick** was a stolen child. In this regard he was a model for all up-rooted and orphaned children. Having come to know Jesus during his exile, he came back to Ireland to convert the inhabitants.

St. Germain of Paris got to know at first hand the problems of street children after he had been obliged to leave the family home to save his life and escape mishandling on the part of his divided parents. He was received by an uncle, who brought him to an abbey. Here he grew to manhood and acquired an education. At the age of 22 he took over the office of Abbot. St. Germain knew everything about life and could express it. At the court of King Childebert, he taught that the truth as far as man was concerned was in the Passion and Resurrection of Christ.

St. Francis of Assisi, disappointed by the deadly process of human ambition, took a view opposite to the values of his day. He opted for mobility and mendicity in opposition to the sedentary way of life based on ownership of property and dependence on titles and social position. He set off to follow in the footsteps of Christ to the point of experiencing the sufferings of the cross in his own body (stigmata) and in his soul. Deprived in this way of all security, he was able to preach the harmony of the universe and mankind.

St. Benedict was outstanding for his charitable activities, particularly on behalf of abandoned children. Born into a very poor family of Gascony, in France, his transition to another society shook him deeply, affecting even his faith. After four years, his prayer could be reduced to the text of the credo which he carried over his heart. After that, abiding by this credo: "Leaving God only for God", he was able to meet the needs of his day. ❏

International Centre for Intercultural Realities, Paris , France. *Original in French.*

Working with Disabled Children and Youth in a Multicultural Community

Mary-Therese HARRINGTON *

If one is working with those who come from many cultural backgrounds and have various levels of disability, one must naturally begin with developing an awareness of what each one lives, what each one experiences.

Every time a community of faith gathers, this is beginning point. Everyone loves to hear stories from one another and the variety of backgrounds adds to the enjoyment. Gradually a community develops a shared narrative of its life together, but even so, most stories are rooted in the family, in the group home, in the residence which are multi-cultural. Eventually the community members move to how they feel about what they live. A leader brings these elements together in such a way as to highten awareness. Then if the community has prayed together in a liturgical assembly, an element of that experience can be evoked, and one can go on to evoke an element of the experience from Holy Scripture. Finally, one comes back to everyday life to see it as a blessing.

In order to do this process well, we have found it necessary to use the catechumenate model, that is, each person with a disability has an adult sponsor. It is very helpful to have the volunteer sponsor to be from a similar ethnic or racial group as the person with a disability (...). If there are six children in a group, there will be six sponsors and two leaders. These adults are from various traditions spiritually, culturally. My conviction is that those who prepare these adults for their mission must set a tone of respect, concern and fairness. The adults will go through their own conversions relating to one another and the children and youth. They need leadership and support so that the experience can be enriching and growth-filled.

In Holy Scripture, the stranger is the widow, the orphan, the resident alien. He is considered to be an angel in disguise, the holy being hidden within the person. How they are to be regarded and how one offers hospitality involves the drama of compassion, of hostility, salvation or rejection. In the Christian tradition, how one welcomes the stranger is the measure with which one is to be measured.

The Christian paradox is that the one who is rejected, becomes the corner stone of the assembly. The one who is put outside the walls, becomes the keeper of the gates. If one welcomes the stranger, one in turn will be welcomed and blessed.

«Attacking others is like disfiguring one's own face»

In a city in the outskirts of Paris, the Association "les Alouettes" brings together some 360 children of 28 different nationalities. There are of course clashes with other groups of young people of the Paris region. It is a source of frequent confrontation. It is during such a confrontation that the educator, **Youssef MAJRI**, tries to calm down the young people by reminding them: "Tomorrow, you will have to shave and to do so you wil need to look in a mirror. In the mirror, you will see the the image of a child of God: in aggressing others, it is your own face which you will be disfiguring".

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* Special Religious Education Division (SPRED), Archdiocese of Chicago,USA.

The Child, Learning and Disability in Pakistan and Great Britain

Christine MILES *

Every learning process implies the transmission of culture. It is difficult to get the child to move - and sometimes his family as well - from ignorance to language. The author describes her experiences in Pakistan and in Great Britain with ethnic families and children with problems.

While running a special school at Peshawar, Pakistan, I also shared skills with staff, for work with children who have learning difficulties and multiple disabilities, in Urdu, Pushto, Hindko, Punjabi, English. During these years I grappled with many new perceptions of cultural differences in an effort to communicate in conceptual terms that would be easily understood by local colleagues and training course participants.

The word "learn" did not here imply a developmental acquisition of skills and understanding, as I had assumed. To "learn" meant either "to memorize a book by rote", as children do in school, or to pick up skills by copying/obeying a master (as an apprentice does). Skill acquisition through being motivated, learning as an enjoyable process, were unfamiliar ideas.

Concepts of child-rearing

Parental control over the child happens differently, and for different ends. In the dominant British middle-class culture, parents control the young child closely. As the child grows older, they dictate less, expecting that the child will lead a self-controlled, independent life, as a teenager. Whereas in the average Pakistani family the infant is not thought ready for parental control, but control increases as s/he grows older. Up to about 5, infants do more or less as they wish, but when grown up they will expect senior relatives to make the important decisions, e.g., career, marriage.

Learning abilities

Can the Pakistani special school satisfy families' perceived priorities? Local teachers also share these priorities, unless "Westernised". Modern special education now emphasises partnership with parents. Should we demonstrate and teach modern childhood and learning concepts, though these may make teachers uneasy about families' priorities? It is important that teachers develop their skills within the context of their own conceptual framework, rather than "learning a package".

In Great Britain, I work with families/special children of Asian ethnic minorities, and research the early language development of children with severe learning difficulties in multi-lingual home/school situations. The school system makes some effort to take account of ethnic cultures, but very few teachers speak an Asian language. The battle for mother-tongue early teaching has hardly begun, despite growing evidence of its effectiveness in other multi-cultural, multi-lingual societies.

In both poor and wealthy nations, many children with learning difficulties and multiple disabilities are further handicapped by teachers' ignorance of language and cultural factors, family misperceptions of their children's problems, and the general lack of informed interest among planners and politicians. Information for solutions is growing, but is not yet widely known. Where known, its application is patchy. There is much to be done. ❑

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* Worked in Pakistan, with her husband, from 1978 to 1989, running a special school for children with mental or multiple handicaps (Mental Health Centre, Peshawar). Author of an article entitled "Mobilising skills for special education in Pakistan: a personal cross-cultural experience", International Journal of Special Education, 1991, vol.6 no2.

Parenting in a New Culture

Daniel SCHEINFELD *

The ICCB Regional Secretariat for North America coordinated three eight-week pilot parent support groups for Cambodian refugee families resettled in the United States. This presentation will focus on two of these projects located in Providence, Rhode Island and the South East Asian Support Center of St. Joseph's Hospital and Tacoma, Washington under the joint auspices of Lutheran special services and Catholic social services.

Providence and Tacoma both have Cambodian refugee populations of about 6,000. These are families of rural and agricultural background having two or three years of formal education and literate in neither Cambodian nor English.

Among the parents, one finds high incidence of addicted gambling and alcoholism. Both of these are destructive to child-rearing and family well-being. There is some drug abuse (perhaps 10%) and widespread fatigue from relentless economic pressures and cultural alientation. Underpinning this great malaise in the Cambodian community is the traumatic experience of the Khmer Rouge years during which almost all of the parent generation suffered terribly.

Many parents have difficulty taking care of themselves and subsequently experience crisis with their children. These typically involve breakdown in communication, runaways, failure to attend school, gang and criminal activity. The essence of the problem is breakdown between generations. Three factors contribute to the intergenerational tension: (1) a parental culture with a strong authority emphasis and claims to absolute parental knowledge, (2) standards for child behavior which are radically different than those of the host culture and (3) relative lack of information on the part of Cambodian parents concerning U.S. culture and society.

The team at each site consists of a coordinator and two Cambodian refugee teachers referred to as facilitators. In Providence the parent participants were involved with the 1-2-1 counseling at the SEA Support Center and were identified as having the most trouble with their children.

The eight-week sessions in Providence addressed effective discipline in the family : enforcing rules that are clear, fair and consistent. The teaching strategy was to (1) ask parents to identify a set of behavioral problems displayed by their children and (2) identify a set of closely held traditional cultural and spiritual values associated with the problem. The staff helped the parent learn how to set and enforce rules in relation to these. In the last three sessions, staff used role play to illustrate positive and negative patterns of parent-child interaction.

In Tacoma, the parent participants were recruited or referred from educators, welfare workers, doctors' offices and flyers in Cambodian grocery stores. The focus of the Tacoma site was to engage parents in a process that would eventually enable them to become a source of support and trust for each other. The majority of the sessions used a video produced by one of the facilitators to encourage discussion on the following subjects: adult alcoholism and gambling, youth gangs and drug abuse. Following each video clip, parents were asked, "Do you have any ideas about how to support a parent who is in this situation? What if you were this person, what would you do?" Parents are never asked directly to talk about their own problems. But often after participating in the general discussions, they will bring in their own problems.

THE CHILD
ON THE
INTERCULTURAL SCENE

"The Child on the Intercultural Scene"

H. Brusset, ICCB, Geneva, 1992.

Teachers, eductors, social workers, not to speak of company managers, are in contact daily with intercultural issues resulting from the intermixing of ethnic groups, but have no adequate guidelines to cope with them. The International Catholic Child Bureau has been giving particular attention to the issue of the child in an intercultural environment. The aim of this work is to present simultaneously research and projects in the intercultural sphere which should provide food for thought to practitioners and possible means of implementation to research workers, so as to help the child on the intercultural scene to build up his/her identity. *Available from the ICCB General Secretariat.*

Anthropologist, Erikson Institute for Advanced Studies in Child Development, Chicago, USA.

Bolivia: Children and Adolescents in a Pluricultural Society

Juan Carlos NUNEZ [*]

Professor J.C. Nunez describes in detail the situation of children in Bolivian society, where 70% of the population is indigenous and has survived in spite of the opposition and exploitation of the official State apparatus. The State has in the last five centuries caused the disappearance of some Andean and Amazonian tribes which it exploited for the production of the raw materials which have made the country rich. Nowadays, 39 indigenous tribes are still oppressed by a privileged nation. Indigenous cultures place children at the centre of attention and give pride of place to the family and small communities. The development of children is based on symbolic gestures corresponding to their integration and increasing responsibilities within the family and society.

Poverty leads to the breakdown of the physiological and psycho-social environment of a human group, whether the family or the community. This in turn leads to a search for survival strategies. The family group soon finds that it does not have enough resources to maintain its members, obliging it to put its children to work at an early age.

Children and adolescents are engaged in a constant battle to survive under conditions of exploitation, delinquency, prostitution, etc. More and more drop out of school, opting for jobs as shoeshine boys, criers for street vendors, car washers, pedlars, water carriers, etc. A very special phenomenon is emerging in relation to young children. They are becoming involved by necessity in an irreversible process. A child worker who has managed to become financially independent of his family through his own work, is heading towards total independence. The categories of «children of the street» and «children on the street» are just two different degrees of the same process. The destruction of the family leads to a new model.

But children in the street are also easy prey to the plagues of «civilised» society. Massive prostitution is inevitable, and many children become addicted to substances such as paint thinner, gasoline, etc. There has been an upsurge in social groupings that replace the family such as the famous gangs of children, etc. The levels of school drop-outs are increasing and figures for child-juvenile delinquency seem to be difficult to contain.

The internal migration process underway means that many of these problems are being encountered by children from families in the Andean region in particular and to a lesser extent from the Amazon region. ❑

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Family, Community and Forced Migration

Shirley FOZZARD [**]

To alleviate the distress experienced by refugees, especially children and women, from Mozambique living in Ukwimi Refugee Settlement, Zambia, ICCB implemented a community-based programme.

The research studies indicate that the emotional well-being of the Mozambican children is influenced by the well-being of their parents. It is important, therefore, that we consider the context of the child's experiences when implementing intervention programmes. Focusing on treating only those negative outcomes observed in the children may have limited benefit, and will not necessarily occasion an improvement in their overall situation.

The needs of the parents must also be understood from within the context in which they are functioning, and by identifying those factors that give rise to emotional distress. By focusing on the consequences of disturbing life events, therapeutic models of intervention tend to be concerned with "closure" on the events that affect people's emotional well-being. Certain techniques may draw, for example, on work with victims of one-time traumatic events, such as natural disaster, or witnessing the murder or abuse of a loved one. In this context, therapeutic intervention is both necessary and beneficial.

The research studies with the Mozambican refugees, however, reveal a continuous, on-going process that has a negative effect on the refugees emotional well-being. In such a situation, less than closure on the events, they need to be able to develop active coping strategies to enable them to confront their situation with some measure of personal control. We cannot change many of the conditions that they experience. Sadly, they are inherent in any situation of forced migration. Increased awareness and understanding of how the refugees are affected by these conditions can, however, assist in the development of programmes of intervention that facilitate a more constructive response to their psychological needs.

The research studies were designed to inform the process of intervention with the Mozambican refugees. The results, however, also have a wider application as they increase our understanding of the ways in which refugee communities respond to the negative life events which confront them. They offer an opportunity for developing a more sensitive and informed response to psychosocial needs occasioned by forced migration. ❑

[**] Consultant for the ICCB Refugee Programme.

The Use of Music

Marianne SEBASTIEN [*]

Music is a very special instrument to enable children to recover their «interior harmony» and to find a balance with the surrounding environment. The author gives an example of ethnic groups which developed because of a collective experience of music and songs, which proved to be a source of peace, serenity and enrichment for the community as a whole.

Music is the bearer of a profound cultural truth. According to proverbial wisdom, people do not lie when singing. Singing is linked with the spirit. Singing is like letting God sing a little in you. Or praying twice. A people that no longer plays its own music is a people in the throes of death. Music reflects the life of a people as a whole.

As a musician, I am convinced that local forms of music can help to overcome intercultural problems and to build development projects which are firmly based on authentic cultural roots.

Music and full development

«Musique Esperance» is an organisation established by the Argentinian pianist, Miguel Angel Estrella, who suffered imprisonment and torture (even to his hands) under the military government in his country. Its aim is to encourage full development based on the cultural and musical heritage of a people so that the interior justice which underlies artistic activity can be transformed into external justice.

In Santiago, a small town in north-west Argentina, «Musique Espérance» has set up a small music workshop for the Quetchua Indians. There is intense rural depopulation in this region. Work started simply with this music workshop using local musical instruments and songs. Miguel Estrella then took a children's choir on a concert tour. On returning, the children were proud of having been heard and admired everywhere, and enriched in the knowledge that their culture had been appreciated by others. Whereas in the past they had suffered from an inferiority complex, this enabled them to regain a feeling of dignity, so much so that they began a major integrated development project. Their cultural centre became a meeting place which triggered off an awareness of the wealth of their local culture, and discussion on the future progress of the community as desired by the community. Little by little, a water system was installed which led to the creation of vegetable gardens, a confectionery workshop and a small dispensary. This curbed the depopulation of the village. It was all done on an equal footing with «Musique Espérance», in other words without financial assistance, as the instruments were bought with the proceeds from concerts.

Elsewhere, in Burgdorf, a small Swiss town near Berne with 1700 inhabitants, a large number of asylum-seekers live in isolation from everyone else. One woman took the initiative of getting them together for an evening of music and dances from their respective countries: Sri Lanka, Albania, Kurdistan... There was a sentence at the top of the programme: «*Foreigners, you will remain foreigners until you learn to get to know yourselves*», followed by a summary of the history of each ethnic group. The party was a great success. If there had just been a meal (as had happened before), nothing of this importance could have been initiated.

For music and by music, differences are accepted and respected - not simply tolerated. Accepting the music of a people, not closing one's ears or spirit means establishing links of co-existence. It is important, therefore, to teach children to appreciate, like and, why not, practise the music of another people in order to comprehend their soul and thus create the bases for mutual understanding and peace education. ❑

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[*] Musician, Geneva, Switzerland. *Original in French.*

Using Oral Traditions

Sally DESPOIS *

In societies of oral tradition memorization of myths and sagas is of paramount importance, and a corpus of memorized works is considered to be an integral part of the national heritage.

Memorization of texts and poetry seems to have been neglected in recent years in favour of a more scientific approach to learning which insists more on comprehension, analysis and criticism. Daniel Wagner, professor at the Literacy Research Centre of the University of Pennsylvania tells of research carried out in 1987, concerning the link between memorization and reading skills at a Coranic school in Morocco. This study showed that the children concerned had a very high degree of ability in memorization, and were extremely bright in acquiring basic numeracy and literacy skills. A similar experiment concerning children with a slight mental handicap, which prevented them from learning to read in the traditional way was carried out. The teacher tried what she called "the imitative method" whereby she had the children listen to the same story about twenty times and then asked them to recite it, as a sort of game, until they knew it by heart. By then giving the same passages to read, she observed their desire to master the written word, and their desire to progress. The article ended with the question *"Should memory be limited to the quest of things past or should we consider that its pedagogic application gives it an important role in the present and the future?"*

With the advent of the mass media, especially of television, the art of story telling is fast disappearing, even in those privileged bastions of orality, which are certain African countries. One of the last great voices, that of the sage Amadou Hampâté Bâ from Mali, who died last year, declared some years ago *"An elder who dies is a library which goes up in flames"*

Serious efforts have been made, nevertheless, in recent years, to rehabilitate the art. Storytelling centres have been set up in Paris and in many other towns, which attract children, and through the children, a great number of adults, especially among the immigrant population from ethnic groups of oral tradition. These people have an enormous contribution to make in this field, and it is perceived as of paramount importance in our multi-cultural society where insertion is often a major problem.

In another field, which is not so far removed from the aforementioned, people have been coming together more and more, in an effort to come to terms with the differences which tend to create tensions in certain quarters, and when approached differently, may be factors of unity and comprehension. In the late seventies, in a greater Paris suburb, the first of many centres was founded by an enterprising schoolteacher. She called them "Réseaux d'échanges de savoir" or roughly "networks to encourage exchanges of knowledge". These centres now function at a local, national, and even international level. Their aim is to bring people together on the assumption that each individual has some aptitude, knowledge or skill, which, shared with others, may be a factor of social integration, communication and mutual understanding. Exchanges are free. No money changes hands and the organizers are careful to see that all is carried out in a spirit of reciprocity, on a person to person basis. An Algerian lady teaches a group of French ladies how to make couscous. One of the group teaches this lady's son the right way to way to word his curriculum vitae, and this boy gives a maths lesson to several young people in the district.

Oral traditions are alive and well and thriving on our very doorsteps! ❑

Member of the International Centre for Intercultural Realities, Paris, France. *Original in French.*

ICCB Contribution to the World Decade for Cultural Development (WDCD), 1988-1997

Fr. François COUDREAU *

UNESCO, the specialised UN agency for science, culture, education and communication, is pursuing its research on the «educational consequences» of interculturalism. It has just set up a world committee on culture and development. The ICCB will propose to this committee that it incorporate the intercultural dimension in two ways:

◆ **homo-culture**: educating (ex ducere) means developing (cultivating) the germinal cellule of the human being in keeping with the **spiritual dimension** which is the basis for his dignity as a «person» and which gives all cultures their common denominator and common source. This **spiritual growth** is called **interiority**.

◆ **cultural relation**: educating means developing (cultivating) the relationship with the other in order to learn to «live together», which is the source of community life. Interculturalism is one of the most fertile ways of weaving community links. This **relationship with otherness** is called **discernment.**

Such is the educational richness which interculturalism brings. It should enrich educational methods within the family, school and the media.

May the WDCD create this educational shock which the international community badly needs! Let us hope the ICCB will become involved in this research in order to take part in and benefit from this historic opportunity.

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* ICCB Permanent Representative at UNESCO, Paris, France. *Original in French.*

Orientations for Program Development

Meg GARDINIER *

Child care professionals representing over 15 cultures worldwide informed their colleagues of culturally appropriate intervention strategies for children marginalized by economic and spiritual poverty, disabilities, armed conflict and forced migration, family breakdown and ideological differences.

ICCB President, Amin Fahim expressed the need for guidelines to enrich future work within an intercultural context. In his opening address, "Culture: The Forgotten Dimension", ICCB Secretary General François Rüegg called for a cultural frame of reference. *"Western society is immersed in the ideology of development and the yardstick is economic. There are few statistics, charts or quantifiable data on culture."* Father Coudreau advised, *"We have to extend beyond merely tolerance of different cultures to an understanding and positive interaction between groups."*

Participants agreed that gaps which exist between cultures, generations and marginalized groups must be filled. If accommodations are not made then negative substitutes will be formed. *"Gangs and related violence fill the void left by the intergenerational gap"*, said Mary Therese Harrington of the Special Religious Education Division in Chicago. Based on concrete experience, conference participants put forth the following principles for program development:

◆ Examine the root causes responsible for the plight of children

In Rumania, it was a lack of economic policies combined with legislation against family planning, not an absence of family values that led to the institutionalization of children. *"Rumanian parents did not place their children in state-run institutions with the intent of abandoning them. Parents, mostly from rural areas, considered it an act of mercy to insure that their children had food, particularly during the winter months"*, explained Father Robert Vitillo of Caritas Internationalis. Caritas Internationalis is working with the Catholic Health Association to initiate a small group home for handicapped children to prepare them for a possible return home or adoption.

In West Africa, the growing numbers of street children and sexually exploited children are a result of low enrollments in educational institutions, few prospects for job training and family breakdown. As Djakaridja Kone explains, "Programs must take into consideration all these dimensions and fully care for the children."

◆ The earlier we intervene the better

"Poor children lack an environment which stimulates them," explains Dr. Edgardo Menvielle who works with uprooted children in Washington D.C. He elaborated with a chain reaction model: "Children are more likely to be isolated at school owing to factors associated with poverty and lack of parental involvement. This can lead to poor school performance, bad peer relations, low self-esteem, poor behavior and possibly adolescent pregnancy and delinquency."

◆ Build on the existing resources and skills of a population

Mr. Kone has developed vocational training skills for street youth. The intent is to strengthen skills which youth already possess and not necessarily to introduce new techniques. *"Children must carry out their own actions. Interventions must be deeply rooted in the community and in particular, empower parents"*, observes Edgardo Menvielle. Dr. Dan Scheinfeld explained an ICCB North America parenting series for Cambodian refugee families resettled in the United States. *"There is a very strong emphasis in Cambodian culture on deference to adult authority. In the Cambodian frame of reference, the parent knows about the world and appropriate action"*, he said. The parenting series focused on problems parents are experiencing with their children: gangs, runaways, and discipline. The series tried to introduce new parenting techniques while respecting the traditional roles assigned to parents. Questions were raised that merit further attention with a view to program planning.

◆ Learn from the strengths of the population you serve

"The solutions exist within the children; we must listen to the prophetic voice of childhood", said working group participants. *"What can we learn from children who are materially poor? In their struggle to meet the demands of daily life, they develop strong inner resources to transcend their situation"*, stated Mina Ramirez. Edgardo Menvielle raised the question of resiliency: *"Why is it that some children can survive despite chronic stress?"*

◆ Program staff provide positive role models for children and their families

Amin Fahim explained that staff who run intercultural programs between Muslims and Christians in Egypt are from the same ethnic background as the children. *"We are giving the children an image of positive success"*, explains Amin Fahim.

Facilitators conducting the weekly parenting sessions for Cambodians in the United States are also from the Cambodian community. They have experienced the same trauma of being uprooted and raising children in a new culture. But as members of the helping profession, they provide the paricipants with a model of hope. ❑

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* Director, ICCB, New York, USA.

Empowering Parents and Protecting Children

Jim HYLAND *

In October 1991 an Act of Parliament, The Children Act 1989, came into effect in England and Wales. The new Act draws together into one legal framework statutory responsibility for children as laid down in various preceding acts and regulations.

The new Act arises from a considerable number of factors. It brings all the laws concerning the welfare of children into one cogent format. It places all proceedings relating to children into a system where they can be dealt with in a consistent manner under the same rules of law in all courts. Probably of greater significance than the legal and administrative ordering of affairs are the philosophical and theoretical beliefs that have led to the introduction of the 1989 Act. These have their basis in recent dramatic events in child care and in government thinking on the role of the State in child welfare.

Background to the Act

The care of children in England and Wales has been beset for over 20 years with a series of much publicised serious misfortunes. In a few distressing cases children who had been placed in the care of local authorities have been returned home to a parent under supervision and have subsequently died from persistent abuse and maltreatment by their parent or their parent's partner. These events led to a series of public enquiries: Jasmine Beckford (1985); Heidi Koseda (1986); Tyra Henry (1987), Kimberley Carlisle (1987). Then in 1987 we had the Cleveland affair. In this case 121 children were taken into the care of Cleveland County Council over a period of three months because of a belief that their parents were sexually abusing them. A subsequent enquiry by Lord Justice Butler-Sloss (1988) found that the great majority of the children had been wrongly taken from their parents and the rights of both children and parents had been seriously infringed. The new law, therefore, is intended to find and set the correct balance between the duty to protect the rights of the child and the rights and responsibilities of parents.

The best interests of the child and parental responsibility

There is therefore a tension within the Act that places a considerable duty on the Courts and on Social Services Departments to make a judgment about the welfare of the child and the responsibilities of the parent. The welfare of the child has to be the main consideration in determining the needs of the child and, whenever possible, the child's own views and wishes have to be taken fully into account before decisions are made. The Courts and the Social Services Departments also have to take into account "the religious persuasion, racial origin and cultural and linguistic background" of the child when deciding on placements away from the natural family, be it in a foster home or a children's institution.

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* Chairman, Catholic Child Welfare Council, Great Britain.

Shared care

There is a requirement that Courts make their decisions as quickly as possible, but also a strong imperative to remove a child from its family only when they are satisfied that no other arrangements can be made to meet the child's needs. If necessary there will be a sharing of parental responsibility by both parents, for example if they are unmarried and the mother is in agreement, or if parents become divorced. This sharing of responsibility for the child can also continue even if the child is being "looked after" by the Social Services Department.

Court action, in the shape of one of a number of care or supervision orders, will now only be made if a Court is satisfied that a child is suffering - or is likely to suffer - significant harm and that this harm can be attributed to the type of care being given - or likely to be given - to the child.

The new Act in a harsh climate

The Children Act 1989 has been generally welcomed as a progressive piece of legislation particularly in regard to the greater emphasis placed on parental responsibility, shared care, the right of the child to have a voice in deliberations about his or her future, and the recognition of the importance of religious and cultural factors. Practitioners of social care are worried, however, that the obtaining of these ideals in a society experiencing the disruptions caused by unemployment, changing views and practice on marriage and family life and increased crime could prove very problematical. It is to be hoped, for the sake of the children, that the obstacles may be outweighed by the merits of the new law.

The ICCB launches the Prize for Children's Rights

The aim of the ICCB in launching the **Prize for Children's Rights** was to encourage the making of documentary films exposing the violation of children's rights.

The Prize was presented for the first time during the **3rd World Forum of Educational and Religious Video** (Driebergen, The Netherlands, 23 October 1992) organised by the International Catholic Organization for Cinema and Audiovisual (OCIC). The jury, composed of Cristina Balestra (Uruguay), Adrien Ntabona (Burundi), Genevieve Lejeune (ICCB), awarded the Prize for Children's Rights - SFR. 5,000 - to the film **"Broken Buds"** from **Sri Lanka** and a Special Mention to **"Meninos da Rua"** from **Brazil** which defended the street children who are assassinated in Sao Paulo in order to "solve the problem" once and for all.

The sexual exploitation of boys on the beaches of Sri Lanka by westerners is a heinous practice which is growing rapidly. In "Broken Buds" the association PEACE (Protecting Environment and Children Everywhere) denounces this crime against humanity, describes the main causes and presents the preventive and rehabilitation actions it has set up. It also uncovers the faces of clients and of those whose soul and dignity they rob with complete impunity: certain of these children are not even 7 years old, young lives already broken.

The Prize for Children's Rights is a contribution to the efforts of associations and individuals to give voice to the voiceless, the smallest and most deprived, the children who are denied even the most elementary human rights.

G.L.

French Associations and the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

A group of French organisations has been in existence since 1988 to make known the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to work for its ratification by France and, since the obtention of the latter, to contribute to its implementation in and by France. This group now has a Charter and rules of procedure. In order to work more efficiently and to facilitate dialogue with public authorities an Executive Board has been elected: Marie-Paule Eisele, ICCB delegate for France is responsible for its General Secretariat.

This group of NGOs has taken as its name "Conseil Français des Associations pour les Droits de l'Enfant (COFRADE) (French Council of Associations for Children's Rights). It is organised in commissions. Its work is on themes such as "The international dimension of the Convention", "The personal status of the child", "The child and his/her environment", "The child and law", "The child and the media".

For information: COFRADE, temporary secretariat, ICCB, 19 rue de Varenne, F - 75007, Paris/France. Tel. (33-1) 42 22 00 01; Fax (33-1) 45 44 83 43.

The Sexual Exploitation of Children through Prostitution and Pornography

In the context of the mandate it received from Pope John Paul II to maintain the rights of the family and the right to life, the PONTIFICAL COUNCIL FOR THE FAMILY defends the rights of the child. Hence the convening of a "Summit meeting" on the Sexual Exploitation of Children through Prostitution and Pornography, which took place in Bangkok, Thailand on 9-11 September, 1992. ICCB was invited to send a speaker to the meeting. The text of the Final Declaration, unanimously approved, is presented herewith.

"We have come together to address a persistent and pervasive crime against humanity: the sexual exploitation of children through prostitution and pornography. This problem, which is international in scope and requires community, national and international solutions, has resulted in the loss of human dignity, health and even life for millions of the world's children. It is our shared responsibility, in partnership with other concerned individuals, groups and religions, to speak out and take action on behalf of these victimized children.

We oppose the sexual exploitation of children through prostitution and pornography because:

◆ It is a contemporary form of slavery which exploits and degrades the human person for profit and preys on those who are least able to defend themselves.

◆ It causes immense physical, emotional and spiritual harm to each child exploited, trapping them in a cycle of victimization, pain and life-threatening disease.

◆ It perverts God's plan for human relations and intimacy, treating children and all human life as commodities to be sold rather than persons to be loved.

◆ It reduces God's gift of sexuality to a level that lacks the personal dignity, human tenderness, genuine intimacy, mutual love, ethical commitment and responsible consent that are a part of the Divine plan.

◆ It contributes to, rather than honestly confronts, the evil and sickness of pedophiles and other callous consumers, who need to change their despicable behaviour.

We are deeply thankful for the important work already begun by concerned individuals, groups and religious institutions. We recognize the valuable contribution of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which draws specific attention to the need to address the plight of sexually exploited children in prostitution in Articles 34, 35 and 39. These statements should be recognized, endorsed and acted on by every country in the world.

The sexual exploitation of children through prostitution and pornography is evidence of a profound distortion and breakdown of values. That such crimes are committed against children brings shame and sadness to the nations of the world.

Therefore...

◆ We commit ourselves to do all in our power to promote the God-given human values which recognize every child as a sacred gift to be nurtured, protected and loved. We pledge to work with children, empowering them to understand and appropriate their God-given rights and dignity.

◆ We commit ourselves to fostering family life, where the child can grow secure and loved, where the stability, fidelity and generosity of the parents' relationship will afford to the child a steady, safe and peaceful environment. Parents have a moral responsibility to foster and ensure the well-being of their children.

◆ We commit ourselves to work cooperatively with every nation, religion and concerned group to pass and enforce laws which protect children from exploitation through prostitution and pornography. These offences should be considered a crime against humanity in every nation of the world.

◆ We commit ourselves to concerted

efforts to minister morally, physically and emotionally to the victims of child prostitution and pornography. We call on people of faith and goodwill to give sacrifically for their healing and well-being.

◆ We commit ourselves to helping foster an understanding among religious leaders, people of faith and those of goodwill concerning the dimensions of this problem. We pledge our continuing efforts to address the sexual exploitation of children in all forums, in both religious communities and the world. We will do all in our power to educate, mobilize and take action, until this crime against humanity is fully and permanently eliminated.

◆ We call on all adults who demean themselves by participating in the sexual exploitation of children through prostitution and pornography to repent of their crime against humanity. Those who remain silent or deny the existence of this evil also contribute to the problem.

◆ We call on individuals, religious groups, governments and international bodies to publicly acknowledge the scope and severity of the problem. All must take a stand. In the midst of their diversity, the peoples of the world can and must find a common voice and resolve to protect children from prostitution and pornography.

◆ We call on all tour operators and the tourism industry to repudiate "sex tourism" and to respect the human rights of all people in all cultures.

◆ We call on the world's legal and law enforcement community to deepen their cooperation, level of commitment and determination to bring justice to children exploited through prostitution and pornography.

◆ We call on the world's children and youth to help strengthen their own moral values and those of their communities. Children have an important role in helping lead the way for change in the exploitive actions of adults.

◆ We call on all men and women in the business community to refuse to profit from the sexual exploitation of a human person. Children are not commodities for sale as sex objects or pornography subjects. Economic gain at the expense of human dignity and life is wrong.

◆ We call on the media to draw attention to the problem of the sexual exploitation of children through prostitution and pornography. We ask those who are a part of the entertainment and media culture to reject the growing attempts to portray children as appropriate objects of sexuality, whether in advertising or entertainment mediums. We pledge our cooperation for a worldwide media campaign to condemn the sexual exploitation of children through prostitution and pornography.

◆ We call on parents, schools and educators to promote healthful, life affirming sexuality based on the values which will develop children's full capacities into persons rooted in self-esteem and respect for all other members of the community.

◆ We call on all bishops, clergy, pastoral agents and laity to implement in a practical way the foundational principle to which they already subscribe - that the apostolate of the Family is a priority sector of their activities.

◆ We call all the Bishops' Conferences and their respective dioceses to commitment and planning on a community level. We must address this problem on a community level and contribute to its elimination.

The sexual exploitation of children is a grave crime against the truth of the human person. Each person is the image of God, the child of God. Each life is a precious gift of God. In each face shines the great dignity of the human person.

Children, who are the most vulnerable members of society, must be guaranteed enjoyment of all the rights which appertain to human persons. They must be loved, protected and respected in a special way.

Every abuse against their dignity is a crime against humanity and against the future of the human family.

The children of the world trapped in prostitution, pornography and sexual exploitation cry for help. The Lord calls His people to action. Deliberating, resolving and acting together, we pledge to respond. ❑

"The Child : Agent and Promoter of Culture"

Ghislaine de COULOMME LABARTHE *

Articles 8 and 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child state in particular that the child has a right to his own identity and to full participation in cultural life. Within this framework and within the framework of the World Cultural Development Decade, proclaimed in 1988 by the United Nations General Assembly, the responsibility for which has been assigned to UNESCO, it was only fitting that a project devoted to the child should be launched at this time.

Is not the child the bearer of the cultural heritage of societies to come? And culture itself, is it not the sum total of behaviourial patterns, ways of life, thoughts, traditions and artistic expression which are hallmarks of the human species?

Approximately ten non-governmental organizations (in consultative status with UNESCO, including the ICCB), have joined in an effort to bring together various cultural vectors affecting the child. ICCB has been entrusted with the task of coordinating the activities of these NGOs.

A cultural space for the disadvantaged children of Dakar

The project "The Child: Agent and Promoter of Culture" is intended for children between 3 and 10 years of age who are at a disadvantage because of their conditions of life. The project is designed to set up a non-academic "cultural space" through various workshops. Its purpose is to promote an awakening and expansion of the prodigious latent creative potential in every child at that point in the child's life when he or she is developing a cultural identity, by giving the child access to all the components of his or her cultural environment.

This project, which has received its title as well as financing from UNESCO, is a pilot project lasting one year, with a multiplier effect. The first experiment is taking place in Africa, in Senegal, in the disadvantaged urban quarters of Dakar.

A local committee has been constituted in order that the project may be integrated into the environment and the cultural context of the children of Dakar, with due respect for their traditions.It is made up of NGO representatives associated with the project, local associations, representatives of the Church and the commune of Dakar, of the Ministries of Culture, the Family, Women, the Child and Education.

The local committee is coordinated by a sociologist, director of an institute for former street children. Three meetings of this local committee have already been held in Dakar. The first was held at the beginning of August 1992, another in late September and the third in December 1992.

A one-week mission has been organised, led by a research worker in psychology. Its purpose is to evaluate the project at the beginning, middle and end of 1993, with assistance from students at the Faculty in Dakar. The above-mentioned Senegalese ministries are following this project with great interest, hoping that the lessons learned can be used in national programmes. These ministries, although they respect the independence of the NGOs, are participating in the efforts to give the project concrete form. The Ministry for the Family, for Women and Children of Senegal has made its own facilities and space available to the members of the committee.

This project constitutes a fine example of collaboration between NGOs, a government and authorities of the United Nations system (the regional offices of UNESCO and UNICEF in West Africa). This project is expected to take concrete form during the first trimester of 1993. A number of donors have been approached with a request to assist in carrying out this project, a project which should convincingly show the child to be an agent and promoter of culture. ❑

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* ICCB Permanent Representative at UNESCO. For information : ICCB Secretariat in Paris (address on p.27). *Original in French.*

■ **«Street Children - Problems or Persons?»**. Stefan Vanistendael. ICCB Series. Geneva. 1992. 23 pages.

This first publication in the new ICCB Series aims at bringing together a series of ideas, impressions and thoughts amassed during the ten years its author, Director of ICCB's Research and Development Department, has worked on the problem of street children.

Street Children
Problems or Persons?

This booklet responds to a need to have a text on street children which lies somewhere between action and research and a newspaper article and a scientific study. The text clarifies the thorny problem of the definition of street children, and comments on the historical background as well as the present situation, prior to discussing our obligation in this field, which is naturally linked to a transcendental perspective.

■ ***Los Derechos del Niños!!"*** *(The Rights of the Child). Grupos de Catequesis Guillermo Nin S.J.. Oficio Catequisto Arquidiocesano. Movimiento Infancia y Adolescencia. Oratorios y Centros Juveniles S.D.B., Montevideo. 1992.*

This guide was compiled as an information tool on children's rights for children themselves. Games, stories... many are the ways which enable children to discover their rights. It is not presented as something definitive, but as a path to new discoveries, new discussions so as to respect children. It is for use by teachers, catechists and educators. Available from the ICCB Secretariat for Latin America in Montevideo (cf. address p. 27).

■ ***"A Place for All: Mental Retardation, Catechesis and Liturgy"***. *M.T. Harrington. The Liturgical Press. Collegeville. USA. 1992.*

The author, a member of the Society of Helpers, is a catechist on the Chicago Archdiocesan team for Special Religious Education (SPRED). She offers her lived experience of catechesis, liturgy, and sacramental initiation with young people who have significant developmental disabilities such as autism, celebral palsy, epilepsy, and mental retardation. According to Sr. Harrington, integration and inclusion of people with disabilities into parish life should be a goal of all pastoral ministers.

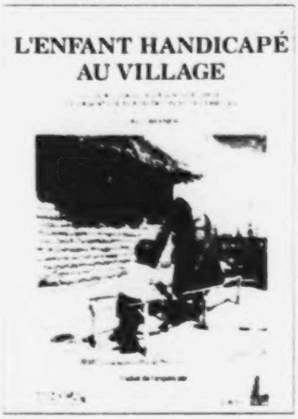
■ ***"Concepts of Mental Retardation in Pakistan: toward cross-cultural and historical perspectives"***. *M. Miles. Disability, Handicap & Society. Vol. 7. No. 3. 1992.*

This paper reviews concepts of mental retardation in Pakistan against an historical Asian and Islamic background, and discusses some hazards of Western cultural hegemony in this field. Since most family relationships and structures in Pakistan differ substantially from norms in Western countries, Western notions of "independent living" and "self-advocacy" are questioned.

■ ***"Il manuale della scuola materna non statale"*** *(The handbook of private nursery schools). A. Caturano. G. Totaro. Edition FISM. Rome. 1991.*

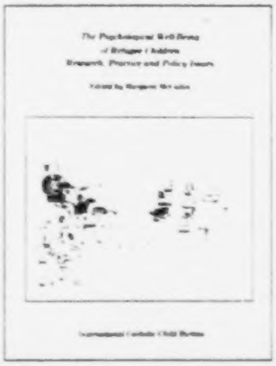
The 8000 schools run by the FISM (Italian Federation of Christian Nursery Schools) have to face not only educational problems, but also problems of management. This manual, in two volumes, was compiled with the aim of offering some solutions. It also contains Pope John-Paul II's four speeches to the FISM: "The most valuable thing we can do for the future, is to encourage and support all institutions who have children's education at heart".

■ ***"L'enfant handicapé au village"***. *(The disabled child in the village) David Werner. Handicap International. France. 1992.*



This book is presented in the form of a guide for the use of health workers, therapists and families, but also all those who are concerned about the well being of disabled children. Written by David Werner, who is himself disabled, in collaboration with other disabled persons and precursors of readaptation, this guide provides information on the most usual disabilities in children and proposes simple solutions to help a disabled child become integrated and be accepted in a community.

"The Psychological Well-Being of Refugee Children. Research, Practice and Policy Issues", *Margaret McCallin. ICCB, Geneva, 1992.*



Refugees, because of their painful experiences, suffer as much physically as psychologically. This book, which takes up the papers presented at the ICCB Seminar on The Psychological Well-Being of Refugee Children (Geneva, 1991), describes experiences, informs on the research undertaken and puts forward some conclusions on the need to provide refugees with a psychological well-being. Its aim: create public awareness so that future programmes for refugees take this requirement into account. Principally written for individuals and organizations working with refugees, this book could also be of great interest to those concerned by other humanitarian causes.

CONFERENCE CALENDAR

1. **Organising body**
2. **Type of meeting**
3. **Theme**
4. **Remarks**
5. **Address and telephone number for further information**

1992

19-21 November

Vatican City,
Vatican

1. Pontifical Council for Pastoral Assistance to Health Care Workers
2. VII International conference
3. "Your Members are the Body of Christ: Persons with Disabilities in Society
4. Languages: English, French, Italian and Spanish
5. Pontifical Council for Pastoral Assistance to Health Care Workers, V - 00120 Vatican City
   Tel. (39-6) 698 831 38 or 698 847 20; Fax (39-6) 698 831 39

1993

17-20 March

Berlin,
Germany

1. World Association for Christian Communication (WACC)
2. Conference
3. "Communication in Changing Europe"
4. Languages: English, German and French
   Discussion groups on 17 March include "Youth and mass media"
   On 19 March, Young people's presentation on "The Future of Europe and its Media"
5. Conference on Communication in Changing Europe, World Association for
   Christian Communication, 237 Kennington Lane, London SE11 5QY/Great Britain

June

Vienna,
Austria

1. United Nations
2. World conference
3. World Conference on Human Rights
4. Languages: -
5. Centre for Human Rights, United Nations, CH - 1211 Geneva 10/Switzerland -
   Tel. (44-22) 731 02 11; Fax (44-22) 733 98 79 and
   Department of Public Information, Room S-1040, United Nations, New York,
   N.Y. 10017/USA

13-19 June

Oñate,
Spain

1. Department of Justice, Law and Society, The American University, Washington D.C.
2. International conference
3. "Children and HIV/AIDS: Medical, Ethical, and Legal Issues"
4. Languages: English, Spanish, French and Italian
5. Prof. Emilio Viano, School of Public Affairs/DJLS, The American University,
   4400 Massachusetts Avenue N.W., Washington D.C. 20016-8043/USA -
   Tel. (12-02) 885-2948; Fax (12-02) 885-1292

20-25 June

Jerusalem,
Israel

1. Israel Rehabilitation Society and Israel Society for Adolescent Health
2. Second International Symposium on Youth and Disability
3. Major theme "The Adolescent with a Disability" -
   A second theme: "The Impact of Disability in the Family" and
   a third theme: "The Involvement of Youth in Voluntary work for Disabled Persons"
4. Language: English
5. Conference Secretariat: Ortra Ltd., 2 Kaufman Street, P.O. Box 50432, Tel Aviv/Israel -
   Tel. (972-3) 664825; Fax (972-3) 660952

iccb

The International Catholic Child Bureau (ICCB), founded in France in 1948, is an International Catholic Organization grouping together organisations and individuals working for children in more than forty countries. The ICCB provides the means whereby all those concerned with defending children's interests can come together at the international level and join their efforts in the realisation of concrete projects for service to children.

The ICCB initiated the International Year of the Child (1979), and launched an international programme for street children (1982). The ICCB is active in various programmes at the present time:

- ▲ Psycho-social needs of refugee children
- ▲ Hidden handicapped children
- ▲ Street children and drug abuse
- ▲ Sexually exploited children (Prostitution - Pornography)
- ▲ Intercultural training of educators
- ▲ Children and media
- ▲ Child-to-Child (a health education programme)
- ▲ Medico-Educational and Psycho-Social Special Care

In all its programmes the ICCB takes into account **four essential dimensions:**

- ▲ Spiritual growth
- ▲ The family
- ▲ Intercultural understanding
- ▲ The rights of the child

The ICCB has consultative status with ECOSOC, UNESCO, UNICEF and the Council of Europe.

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Promoting a holistic approach to children worldwide

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